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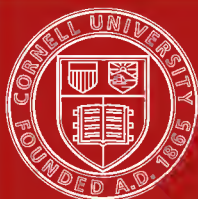
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**Thomas Linley, Richard Brinsley Sheridan**



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THOMAS LINLEY,  
RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN,  
AND  
THOMAS MATHEWS,  
THEIR CONNECTION WITH BATH.

BY  
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*Three Papers read before the Bath Antiquarian Field Club in  
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THOMAS LINLEY.



## THOMAS LINLEY : HIS CONNECTION WITH BATH.

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Thomas Linley and his family were for a time so prominently associated with Bath as skilled musicians, and from other public circumstances which will be alluded to they attracted also so much notice, such a wide interest outside Bath, that some local record of them should be available. Of what has been already said about them much is by no means exact. There has been too often a :—

Mis quoting, mis dating,  
Mis placing, mis stating,  
At war with truth, reason, and fact.

If, therefore, these notes should sometimes seem rather minute, it must be understood that they are so with purpose aforethought but without malice ; criticism and correction are especial points intended.

Thomas Linley, says the " Dictionary of National Biography," " was born at Wells in 1732, the son of a carpenter. Being sent to do carpentering work at Badminton, the seat of the duke of Beaufort, he derived so much pleasure from listening to the playing and singing of Thomas Chilcot, the organist of Bath Abbey church, that he determined to become a musician," and so he presently studied under Chilcot at Bath.

This account just varies from another which tells that he was the son of a carpenter and was originally intended to follow his father's business. Being however one day at work at Badminton, the seat of the duke of Beaufort, he was overheard to sing by Mr. Chilcot, at that time organist at Bath, who was so much delighted with his voice that he prevailed with his father to allow him to quit the trade and study music.\*

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\* " Musical Biography," Vol. 2, p. 210.

A few thoughts must be given to these stories. First an estate like Badminton would hardly require a carpenter from Wells, such mechanics being usually regularly employed. Then a carpenter to be sent out on day work would be at least twenty-one years old, hardly a time to throw up an already acquired trade skill to begin a new and difficult study. Further if he came from Wells, a place where he cou'd every day hear

Godless boys God's glory squall—

neither singing nor the organ could have been new to him. The writer of the first notice evidently writing without considering his words, from some tradition but without personal or local knowledge, seems to have had no idea of the relative positions of Bath, Wells and Badminton. Yet had he known enough to have avoided confusing the father, who was a carpenter, with the son Thomas who never was so, there is, as will be seen, just a substratum of truth in the story. Another form of the story, modern, but not new, says that Chilcot noticed a little boy of musical taste and took him as a pupil. He came from Wells, &c.\* From the omission of a few necessary words this reads as if little boys easily wandered alone from Wells to Bath to be casually noticed and picked up.

Whilst the above accounts make the birthplace Wells, another makes it Gloucester,† and yet another, a very recent one, gives the rather wide guess that he came from Yorkshire. He had at least in the last county plenty of room for a start. This statement should not have been written, it simply helps to confound confusion. If the writer did not know he could not tell and should have acknowledged that position or have said nothing. The last account makes him born at Bath in 1725, but repeats that he became a pupil of Chilcot, &c.‡

\* "Fitzgerald's Lives of the Sheridans," 1886.

† *Tinsley's Magazine*, Vol. xxxix, p. 134, 1886.

‡ "Biographical Dict. of Musicians." By Thos. Baker, 1900.

Dismissing all former accounts and guesses, the origin of the family may be given and all doubt settled. The carpenter then came from Badminton and he brought with him three children, Thomas, Isabella, and William. To clear the way somewhat, Isabella the daughter of William and Maria Lingley, as the name is spelled in the register, was baptized at Badminton 9th October, 1737. She married in the Abbey church, Bath, one Richard Philpot, 17th October, 1764.

William, the youngest of the three, son of William and Maria Linley, spelled now without the g, was baptized at Badminton 29th July, 1744. Nothing more can be told of him. As this youngest child was baptized at Badminton in 1744 it would have been soon after that date that Linley the father, the carpenter, moved to Bath, just when by reason of much building there must have been a great demand for mechanics of all sorts. He continued his business at Bath and was alive there in 1770 with a somewhat improved status. In 1772, 26th November, an advertisement relating to St. Margaret's chapel announced that a plan of the pews in the new chapel being now settled and the prices thereof, those disposed to take seats should apply to Mr. William Linley, Clerk of the Works at the chapel, or at his house in the Market Place.\* He is found as a ratepayer for some years after this. In 1773 he purchased and was living in his own house in Belmont Row, rated at £70 per annum,† and in 1779 and until 1792 he paid poor rate for the same house. He was buried at Walcot 26th October, 1792, and was soon followed by Mrs. Maria Linley, who was buried in the same grave 22nd December, 1792.

There now remains the eldest of the three children, Thomas our musician, who was baptized at Badminton, the son of William and Maria Lingley, with the g, 20th January, 1733.

Thus he would be at the time his father probably came to Bath

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\* *Bath Chronicle*, p. 1, col. 3.      † Water Rents.

between eleven and twelve years old. From all the notes and notices of Thomas printed during his life it is clear that he was early acquainted with Chilcot and as his first start was engaged to him in the humble station of errand boy. He soon showed such a tendency to and fondness for music that Chilcot was attracted to the boy and encouraged and indulged him in his hobby. Eventually he took him as an apprentice, behaved well to him and taught him thoroughly all the rudiments and practice of the art.\* No indentures are on record, so the exact time served cannot be given. In March, 1752, Thomas Chilcot paid six shillings for Freedom fees.† An early, rapid, and extraordinary proficiency brought Chilcot some profit for a time, but as soon as he could the pupil left the master, got engaged in the public rooms at Bath, and so "played into his own pocket." He next started as a teacher, and in this position became at once promptly recognised as having great ability and skill for the work. He was thus successful and established and well known by the time he was twenty. He is reported to have gone abroad and completed his musical education under one Paradies or Paradisi, but he could have had neither the means nor the opportunity for doing so.

With this first knowledge of this extraordinary young man, his own family and after career may next be traced.

As showing his early prosperity he married very young, when about nineteen, but as in such cases the man usually goes to the bride's home for that occasion, it is too often barely possible without some guide to find notice of the event. Two sons presently get the name of Thurston, thus suggesting a possibility; but at the moment the actual record has not been met with. From this young couple the next great interest now arises. They are said generally to have had seven children, three sons and four

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\* *The Craftsman*, 10th October, 1772.

† "Chamberlain's Accts.," Vol. 48.

daughters, but in fact they had twelve, seven sons and five daughters. The production of evidence for the first time will prevent all doubt.

- 1753. 12 March was baptized in the Abbey church, Bath, George Frederick, son of Thomas and Mary Linley.
- 1754. 25 Sept. was baptized at St. Michael's, Bath, Elizabeth Anne (presently to be the heroine of this story).
- 1756. 11 June, Thomas was baptized in St. James's church, Bath.
- 1758. 10 Feb., Mary was baptized in St. James's.
- 1759. 15 May, Thurston, a son, was baptized in St. James's.
- 1760. 23 June, Samuel was baptized in St. James's.
- 1761. 8 Sept., William Cary was baptized privately and brought to St. James's to be received.
- 1763. 10 Oct., Maria was baptized in St. James's.
- 1765. 22 Aug., Osius Thurston was baptized in the Abbey church, the son of Thomas and Mary of St. James's.
- 1767. 17 Feb., Jane Nash and Charlotte, a twin, daughters of Thomas and Mary Linley of St. James's parish, were brought to church, having been privately baptized.
- 1771. 27 Feb., William was baptized in St. James's.

It must be noticed that the first two, George Frederick and Elizabeth Anne, were baptized in different churches, and so would be born in the respective parishes, thus suggesting that with very modest means the young couple had then an unsettled domicile. The others all show fixture in the parish of St. James's, where their residence was No. 5, Pierpoint Street.\* All these children, even as children, became accomplished musicians. Endowed all of them with great musical talents, to these talents the father compelled the most assiduous and stringent attention. On one occasion the whole family, "down to the seven year olds," appeared together at the New Rooms. The household, now notorious, was dubbed a nest of linnets. The latest mention of this little story changes the birds to nightingales, thus destroying the point, the pretty play upon the name.

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\* Peach. "Historic Houses."

The careers of these children, and then of the parents of this second generation, may now be traced.

GEORGE FREDERICK, so named after Handel, died an infant.

ELIZABETH ANNE early showed a specially marked genius for music, which her father strongly fostered. Under his skilled and qualified and interested guidance her voice was most carefully cultivated, and so successfully, that when only twelve years of age, about 1766, the poor child was put forward as a public singer in the Rooms at Bath, and, too, with an immediate success. She married Richard Brinsley Sheridan, and the remainder of her story may be told with his. She died at the Bristol Hot Wells 28th June, 1792, and was buried in the cathedral at Wells. There is a portrait of her as St. Cecilia at Bowood by Sir Joshua Reynolds; there is another portrait by Gainsborough at Delapré Abbey, and another with her sister Mary, by Gainsborough, in the Dulwich Gallery.

THOMAS, the next son, became early a very skilled violinist, and performed in public when only eight years old. In 1773, when only seventeen, he became solo violinist at Bath, and promised to become great in his profession. He then went to Italy according to the fashion of the day to study under Tartini, or as one account says, under Nardini, who had himself been a pupil of Tartini. On his return he took up the leadership of the orchestra at Bath, his father being then in London. He was thus his father's pride and hope, but alas, he was drowned when away on a visit by the upsetting of a boat, 5th August, 1778. There was published in 1778 :—

A Monody (after the manner of Milton's *Lycidas*) on the death of Mr. Linley who was drowned August the 5th, 1778, in a canal at Grimsthorpe in Lincolnshire the seat of his grace the duke of Lancaster.

This tells us from Milton :—

He must not flote upon his watery bier  
Unwept, and welter in the parching wind,  
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

From the Monody the following few lines are extracted :—

You knew Linlæus ! ah who knew him not ?  
Once, once the pride and treasure of these plains,  
The blithest, sweetest of arcadian swains.

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Eolus, that blustering god had oft with envy heard  
The praises justly given to young Linlæus,  
He oft had heard the soft melodious sounds  
Which from his lyre his dextrous fingers swept.  
He felt their magic power, and wépt.  
And much his hated rival's lyre he fear'd,  
No sooner therefore did he see the boat  
Then—a rude wind—upon his skiff he laid  
And thus avenged his blasted fame.

Or how disturb the peace of such a pair,  
He best of men, she fairest of the fair,\*  
More for their virtues than their rank rever'd,  
By nobles, vassals, artists, all belov'd,  
And e'en to royalty itself endear'd.

Each son of genius on Britannia's plains  
Laments the loss of young Linlæus' strains.

There is a portrait of him, with his sister Mary, by Gainsborough, at Knole in Kent, and another also by Gainsborough in the Dulwich Gallery.

MARY married Richard Tickell, a political pamphleteer and a dramatist, who is said to have been born at Bath about 1751.† There is a portrait of him by Gainsborough. She died at the Hot Wells 27th July, 1787, aged 29, and was buried at Wells, “where she enjoyed happiness and poverty the first year of her marriage.”‡ There is a portrait of her by Romney,§ and, as above, by Gainsborough at Knole, and another with her sister Elizabeth in the Dulwich Gallery, also by Gains-

\* His sister Elizabeth. † Murch, “Bath Celebrities,” p. 317.

‡ Rae, Vol. 2, p. 26. § Romney. By Sir Herb. Maxwell.

borough : and a crayon by Sir Thos. Lawrence. She left a daughter, who became the mother of John Arthur Roebuck.\*

In error, from similarity of name, this Richard Tickell is sometimes supposed to have been the proprietor of a once advertised Ethereal Anodyne Spirit, but the owner of this was William Tickell, a surgeon and chemist who lived in Queen Square, Bath.

THURSTON, the first of the name, died in 1763, and was buried in St. James's church, 13th May.

SAMUEL by the time he was 19 displayed great musical genius on the oboe, but having the offer, he abandoned music as a profession, entered the navy as a midshipman, and sailed on a short cruise in the *Thunderer*, 74 guns, Capt. Walsingham. On his return he obtained leave and visited his family in London, where he was seized with malignant fever and died. It is curious that had he survived and joined his ship death would have still come to him as the *Thunderer* sailing again, never returned, was never heard of more. There is a portrait of him by Gainsborough in the Dulwich Gallery.

WILLIAM CARY died in 1762, and was buried in St. James's 9th October.

MARIA continued a musical career, and it seems strange that she has received no separate biographical notice. She witnessed a marriage in Bath Abbey church 31st October, 1782. She died unmarried, aged only 21. The *Bath Chronicle* 9th September, 1784, says :—†Monday, died after a few days' illness Miss Maria Linley, second daughter of Mr. Linley, one of the patentees of the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane. But as the *Chronicle* was published on thursday the 9th, monday would be the 6th, which is not correct, as she died on the 5th. The *Gentleman's Magazine*, giving the date 5th September, says :—Died at Bath of an inflammatory fever Miss Linley,

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\* "Dict. Nat. Biog." † P. 3, col. 3.



daughter of Mr. Linley, manager of Drury Lane Theatre. Her death "is a loss almost irreparable to the musical world. Those who remember her performance at the oratorios will join in this opinion. The union of a sweet voice, correct judgment, extensive compass, and above all beauty of mind and person, distinguished the much lamented maid, and her character will be dear while memory holds a seat in this distracted globe."\* Another account says she died of a brain fever at her father's house at Bath, 15th September, 1784.† Again the date was the 5th, and further, as her father had at this time no residence at Bath, her death must have been at the house of her grandfather in Belmont. She was buried at Walcot 11th September. In the same grave, in 1792, were buried the grandfather and grandmother, the three in one, Maria being there first in order of date. The grave was No. 26, Row 15 north. Maria in 1784 was No. 722, and in 1792 William was No. 2469, and his wife No. 2493, showing presumably the burials in those eight years. Not a trace or mark can now be found to show the spot, and this has been the case for many years. There is a crayon portrait at Dulwich said to be Maria, by Sir Thos. Lawrence.

Some pretty poems on Maria help the story and confirm the date of death. The first appeared in the *Bath Chronicle* of the 9th September, and corrects the above-noted date error in the same issue. The title runs : —

ON THE DEATH OF THE LOVELY AND MUCH LAMENTED

\* \* \* SEPTEMBER 5, 1784.

If beauty, wit, and innocence could charm  
 And set aside the monarch's stern decree  
 These dear Maria had unnerv'd his arm  
 Or turned averse his fatal shaft from thee.

\* Vol. 54, p. 717,    † "Dict. Nat. Biog."

No more thy strains shall charm our listening ear ;  
 But we for thee no longer ought repine  
 Since God commands thee from our converse here  
 To celebrate His praise in strains divine.

Dear blessed saint ! regard with pitying eye  
 The heartfelt sorrows of thy weeping friend  
 Teach him, like thee to live,—like thee to die  
 Then share with thee those joys which ne'er shall end.

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A week later, 16th September, there appeared some more lines :—\*

ON THE DEATH OF THE LATE MISS M. LINLEY.

Arcadian nymphs and college swains  
 Your rustic mirth give o'er  
 And in soft plaintive dying strains  
 Maria's loss deplore.

Oh ! she was gentle as the dove,  
 Mild as the opening spring,  
 Replete with innocence and love  
 But fate hath clipt her wing.

The nightingale will drop a tear  
 His mistress to bewail  
 And cease to charm the ravish'd ear  
 At news of the sad tale.

Oh, no ! he envied her sweet note  
 And feels a conscious pride;  
 He yet will swell his little throat  
 And grieve not that she died.

Soft hallelujahs will inspire  
 Her true seraphic lays  
 She's mingled with the heavenly choir  
 To chant her Maker's praise.

There is one other poem of similar intention which may be

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\* *Bath Chronicle*, p. 3, col. 2.

noticed, as it is with fair certainty unknown. It was written by Charles Leftley, a friend of her brother William, and is entitled—

A DIRGE  
ON THE MUCH LAMENTED DEATH OF THE  
BEAUTIFUL MARIA LINLEY.\*

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Larded all with sweet flowers  
She bewept to the grave did go  
With true—love showers.  
—*Shakespeare.*

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Underneath this ebon shade  
Mark'd by a rudely sculptured stone  
The lov'd Mária low is laid ;  
Soft be the turf she rests upon.

These flowers that grow around her tomb  
All bear a paler hue  
And die almost before they bloom ;  
Their sympathy so true.

The pensive powers who haunt the grove  
Shall here their vigils keep  
Chaunt their wild requiems o'er my love  
And soothe her lasting sleep.

Pity for her shall touch the string  
And breath her softest sigh  
And here her holy strains shall sing  
Of heaven taught melody.

For she was sweet as opening buds  
Mild as the hours of May  
Bright as the sunbeam on the floods  
And constant as the day.

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\* "The Cabinet," Vol. 1, p. 65.

Friend of my youth ! for thee my tears  
 Spontaneously shall flow  
 And memory through a length of years  
 Shall nurse the sighs of woe.

For thee when autumn flows around  
 An offering sad I'll pay  
 Deck with fresh wreaths thy hallow'd ground  
 And mourn the fatal day.

On thee amid life's varied part  
 My tenderest thoughts shall rest  
 Bemoan'd while love can warm my heart  
 Or friendship cheer my breast.

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OSIAS THURSTON, called in the "Dictionary of National Biography" the eldest son, matriculated at Christ Church college Oxford 19th March, 1785, became B.A. in 1789, took orders and was beneficed in Norfolk.\* In 1816 he resigned his preferments and became Organist Fellow, then so called, of Dulwich College, where he died in 1831, aged 65 it is there said, but he was born in 1765. He was the second son who had the name of Thurston, and this with his unusual first name attracts attention. Among the out rate-payers of Bath for 1779 appears in Lapsdown Road, Horasha Thurston, and so again in 1780. In 1785 he is gone, but in the *Bath Journal* 5th July, 1790, is an advertisement that Mr. H. Thurston, of 3, Burton Street, will sell by auction, &c. The use of two such unusual forenames seems to suggest there must have been a family connection, and possibly through the mother. By his will proved 29 March, 1831,† he left all his estate real and personal to his brother William absolutely. There is a portrait of him at Dulwich College, and a crayon by Sir Thos. Lawrence in the Dulwich Gallery.

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\* Foster, "Alumni Oxonienses." † Tebbs, 162.

JANE married Charles Ward, the secretary at Drury Lane Theatre. There is a crayon portrait of her at Dulwich, by Sir Thos. Lawrence.

CHARLOTTE died young.

WILLIAM, the youngest, entered St. Paul's School, London, in 1785, his age being there recorded as fourteen. He afterwards joined the Civil Service of the East India Company, retiring in 1796. He was a musical composer and from time to time visited Bath, being a joint proprietor of St. Margaret's chapel, where his anthems were performed. He wrote the rhymed epitaph on the Linley tablet now in the cloisters of Wells cathedral, and he printed, in 1819, a small volume which bears an unusually descriptive title :—

“Sonnets and Odes, by William Linley esq. late in the Civil Service of the East India Company, and the late Charles Leftley parliamentary reporter to the *Times* newspaper, both educated at St. Paul's School.”

This is the same Charles Leftley who wrote the Dirge on Maria. He died in 1797, aged 27. William died in London 6th May, 1835, aged 64, and is buried in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, where a tablet on the north wall within, towards the east and above that of his mother records the fact. There is a portrait of him in the Dulwich Gallery as a pretty youth by Sir Thos. Lawrence. There is another somewhere, in later life, by Lonsdale. This has been engraved.

And now comes the last eventful history, that of the parents. From the time of his daughter Elizabeth's successful début, until 1772, Linley's income was thus suddenly very largely increased, and his career generally marvellously assisted by this especially gifted child. He with the harpsichord, his sons with violin and 'cello, and the daughters with their voices made up this attractive and celebrated family. So, then, with conducting oratorios, a style of music wherein his family especially excelled, and composing and playing his own compositions in Bath and elsewhere

on demand, he was a busy man. He became widely acknowledged a master in his profession, equally well versed in the theory as in the practice of music,\* and especially proficient on the harpsichord. So prosperous were his affairs and so altered was his social status that he moved residentially to the Crescent. This move has never been credited, but by good fortune the diary of John Wilkes, Alderman Wilkes, settles the point. Being at Bath, Wilkes enters under 3rd January, 1772—Breakfasted with Mr., the two Miss Linleys, Rolleston, and Miles Andrews, at Mr. Linley's house in the Crescent. So, for the first time this doubt is cleared. Wilkes was much struck with Elizabeth, who he thought the most modest, pleasing, and delicate flower he had † seen for a long time, superior to all the handsome things he had heard of her. But, alas, as the damsel developed into womanhood all this prosperity was spoiled by the bobbing around of that often nuisance, the amorous male, and eventually Elizabeth eloped with young Richard Brinsley Sheridan. This sad act broke up the prosperous Bath home, and largely tended through disappointment and a constant lasting regret to break up the life if not the heart of the father, who was thus, for a second time, deprived of his dearest solace just "in the pride of genius and the meridian of celebrity." A few months after this event, in 1772, Linley left Bath for London. Some connection with Bath, however, was necessarily kept up for a time as the concerts and other work required attention and his house in the Crescent would be on hand. In London he and his family were soon engaged in the oratorios at Drury Lane, and in 1774 he took over their management. In 1776 he bought a share in the Drury Lane patent and so in the business of the theatre and musical composition he spent his life. To his family grief and regrets he here added financial troubles, caused chiefly by the carelessness and erratic conduct of his

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\* "Rees Encyclopædia."

† Almon. "Memoir of Wilkes,"

partner Sheridan. In the end he sank into imbecility. He died, says one account,\* on the 18th November, 1795; whilst another account† puts the event on the 19th November, suddenly, in Southampton Street, Covent Garden. The obituary notice gives us the contemporary opinion that as a musician his works were not distinguished by any striking marks of original genius, but they showed uniformly, taste, feeling, and a full knowledge of the musical art. He did not astonish by sublime effects, but his compositions always soothed and charmed by delicacy, simplicity and tenderness. Two pieces of his music (1) "The Royal Merchant," a comic opera; the other "Elegies for Three Voices," with accompaniment for a harpsichord and violoncello, have been dated respectively 1768 and 1770. If these supposed dates be correct these pieces would have been published during his life at Bath, but the dates being only approximate, and there being no notice of local publishing, this must remain a doubt. His publishing seems to have begun in London. His remains, says one account,‡ were interred, November 29th, in the vault in Wells cloisters with his daughters, Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Tickell. There are two errors here, one of them, considering after events, requiring special notice. The interment, according to the cathedral register, was on the 28th, and then again it was not in the cloisters but in the cathedral. Strangely enough the memorial tablet duly erected by the family, and now to be seen on the east wall of the cloisters, helps actually to confirm this error. It reads:—

Near this place are deposited the remains of Thomas Linley esq. who departed this life November 19 1795 aged 63, together with those of two of his daughters and his granddaughter: Elizabeth Ann wife of R. B. Sheridan, esq. Mary wife of Richard Tickell esq.: Mary infant daughter of the former.

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\* *European Magazine*. † *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 65, p. 973.

‡ *Gentleman's Magazine*, p. 1052.

The lines following or beneath this inscription were, as aforesaid, written by his son William and were first printed in the *European Magazine* for October, 1796.\*

The latest writer who has touched on this subject, who should have been more exact, writes of—the tablet and graves in the cathedral—thus continuing confusion, as both statements are wrong. The interments were not in graves and the tablet is not in the cathedral. But as a fact, to make all clear, the tablet was originally on the north wall of the north aisle, just westward of the north door. It was removed, with others, during the “restoration” in 1850, and was then placed where it now is—where, as aforesaid, it tells an untruth, as its “place” is not near the Linley vault. An addition should be made to it notifying that it had been removed from the north aisle. Whether there was originally an incised stone on the floor over the vault, “restoration” does not record ; if there were, it was “restored” away, and the wall being bared by the removal of the tablet, no place evidence could be seen or detected. The site was lost, after only fifty-five years, but some little search soon brings it back. Phelps, in his “History of Somerset,”† 1839, writing of the cathedral, says :—“ Near the north door is a handsome monument bearing the following inscription, &c., *i.e.*, to Thomas Linley, &c. As the north door has two sides this notice is of only partial service. Another account, 1825,‡ is clearer, as it tells that :—“ On the west side of the north entrance into the nave ” is a handsome marble monument to the memory of Thomas Linley, &c. With one more record comes the one piece of information wanted, and all is clear. Britton, in his “History of the Cathedral,” 1847, says :—On the north wall of the north aisle near the northern entrance is a marble slab commemorating Thomas Linley, &c. The

\* Vol. 30, p. 275. † Vol. 2, p. 86.

‡ Davis J., “Concise Hist. of Cathedral.”



family vault is immediately beneath.\* Had he written like Davis as above, on the west side of instead of "near" the northern entrance, his note would have contained full and exact information. On the late visit of the late lord Dufferin, a descendant from the Elizabeth commemorated, the vault site was looked up, and with the assistance of the above guides and of at least one old inhabitant who could recall seeing the tablet in its original place, the spot was determined. By direction of lord Dufferin an incised stone has been placed on the floor over the vault, and on removing the pavement for this purpose, the crown of the vault was clearly seen. The newly incised slab bears :—

Here lie the remains of  
 THOMAS LINLEY ESQ.  
 who died November 19th 1795  
 aged 63  
 together with those of his two daughters  
 and granddaughter  
 ELIZABETH ANN SHERIDAN  
 wife of Richard Brinsley Sheridan  
 who died July 7th 1792  
 aged 38  
 MARY TICKELL,  
 wife of Richard Tickell  
 who died August 2nd 1787  
 aged 29  
 and  
 MARY infant daughter of the former  
 who died November 26th 1793.

It must be noted unfortunately that the dates of death given on this slab, excepting that of Thomas, are really the dates of burial extracted from the cathedral register, thus adding one more error curiosity to this story. There is also one more as the

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\* Britton J., p. 127.

register records that Elizabeth daughter of Richard Brinsley Sheridan and Mary his wife was buried November 26th, 1793, whereas it was Mary who was the daughter buried and Elizabeth who was the wife.

No statement can be found, no reason has been given why Wells became the place of sepulture. The children from Bath during their earliest childhood seem to have spent some time now and again with an aunt at Wells, but whose name is not otherwise given. This must have been Isabella, the only aunt, but no trace of her or her husband has been found at Wells. When Elizabeth died, herself very famous at the time, and also as wife of Richard Sheridan some influence may have been used; and it may be imagined further, between the lines, that Linley had a strong personal wish towards Wells. The fact that he had secured a family vault there and that he was himself brought so far to be placed in it seems to show a strong predetermination on his part. It is to be regretted that Bath was not chosen, being the native place of the children, the starting point of his own career, and where so much prosperous time had been spent, and besides he would have been within a fane equally worthy and with surroundings and associations much more suitable. Although by reading the obituary notices and generally, the impression is conveyed that Thomas Linley died rather in financial difficulties, this was not so. During his residence at Bath he had purchased house property there and he had also an interest in St. Margaret's chapel. These properties it would seem were probably sold to meet the purchase cost for the theatre. He also bought estate at Didmarton a village adjoining Badminton. By his will dated August, 1788, and proved 1st April, 1796,\* in which he describes himself as of Norfolk Street, formerly of St. Clement Danes, late of St. Paul's Covent Garden, he gave his harpsichord and all his printed and manuscript musical books to

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\* Harris, 195.





WILLIAM LINLEY.

Elizabeth, and his other music interests to Osias and William. Some of these manuscripts are now in the British Museum. To Osias he left his property at Didmorton, and failing issue after him to William. The picture of Mrs. Sheridan and Mrs. Tickell he left to R. B. Sheridan. This is now in the Dulwich Gallery. One hundred pounds each went to his other daughters, and the residue with his interest in Drury Lane Theatre to be equally divided after his wife's death, but the theatre interest to be kept in or sold only to one of the family as long as possible. To his wife he left an annuity of £300 a year. There is a portrait of him by Gainsborough in the Dulwich Gallery. The wife, of whom there are two portraits at Dulwich College, whose life business in London had been the care of the theatre wardrobe, survived him, and died in the forenoon of the 18th January, 1820, aged about 92 says one account,\* but another account tells more clearly that :— “Mrs. Linley, relict of the celebrated Mr. Linley, died yesterday morning (18th January) at her house in Southampton Street, in the 93rd year of her age. She was the mother of the first Mrs. Sheridan.”† These immediate accounts are clear enough, the second of them appearing especially exact. But here comes again a very curious but not the final discrepancy. A tablet, erected may be some time after her death, but erected by her own children, and yet still on the north wall within St. Paul's, Covent Garden, tells that she was aged 91. It records that :—

Near this place are deposited the remains of Mary Linley widow of Thomas Linley esq. late of this parish who departed this life on the 18th January 1820 aged 91. This tablet erected by her sons Osias Thurston and William.

This is on the west side of the wall space between the second and third windows counting from the west. The floor is boarded over so that any slab if there cannot be seen.

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\* *Times*, 19th January, col. 1.

† *Morning Post*, 19th January, p. 3., col. 3.

Recording this tablet, the latest Sheridan biography \* says it is in St. Paul's, Bloomsbury, a place no one could find, Bloomsbury for such a purpose having as much to do with Covent Garden as it has with Bath.

Osias, Jane, and William survived, and of these William the last died in 1835. By his will† dated 1832 William left his property to be divided equally between his nieces Elizabeth Ann Tickell and Mary Esther Ward, but as Mary Esther predeceased him, by a codicil he left all to Elizabeth. Besides his farm and lands called Oldbury in Didmarton and his share in Drury Lane theatre he bequeathed to her his leasehold house in Fountain Buildings, Bath (it was No. 10)‡ and his share in St. Margaret's chapel, Bath. He bequeathed also to her the portrait of himself, seen now in full manhood, by Lonsdale. An engraving of this forms the frontispiece to his "Eight Glees," published about 1830. Other family portraits, including his father "in a white coat," by Gainsborough, he bequeathed to Dulwich College, where, as above noted, they now are. His tablet in St. Paul's, Covent Garden, records him as the last of this family of genius.

\* Rae, Vol. 2, p. 8.    † Gloster 369.    ‡ "British Directory."

## RICHARD BRINSLEY SHERIDAN: HIS CONNECTION WITH BATH.

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Just when Thomas Linley had become prosperous and prominent, there came upon the scene another family, destined greatly to influence his after life. Mr. Thomas Sheridan, an Irishman, himself an actor, but "respectable" only as such, having come to grief and loss over a theatrical speculation in Dublin, adopted the teaching of oratory and elocution as another means of livelihood, claiming that a knowledge of such accomplishments should form part of a gentleman's education. Following out this plan, in 1758 he, with his family, moved from Dublin to the wider field of London,\* determined to give lectures so to attract notice and pupils. Previous to this he had designed the production of an English dictionary, and in connection with this work he published a pamphlet entitled:—

A dissertation on the causes of the difficulties which occur in learning the English tongue; with a scheme for publishing an English grammar and dictionary upon a plan entirely new, the object of which shall be to facilitate the attainment of the English tongue and establish a perpetual standard of pronunciation. Addressed to a noble lord.

This now scarce pamphlet has some local interest as it was reprinted at Bath in 1856, at the Pitman Phonetic Press† As Mr. Sheridan's means were nil, by the influence of Mr. Wedderburn, afterwards Lord Loughborough,‡ who had been a pupil, and through Lord Bute§ the noble lord to whom the above pamphlet was dedicated, he was granted a pension, in 1762, of £200 a year under the pretence of monetary assistance for the

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\* "La Belle Assemblée," Vol. 29.

† *Phonetic Journal*, Vol. 15.

‡ "The Cabinet," Vol. 4.

§ "Dic. Nat. Biog."

dictionary. Always extravagant, stinting nothing of the exterior of a gentleman, he now, aided by this grant, for "47 years lived upon his wits."\*

In 1763, at christmas time, Mr. Sheridan, with Mrs. Sheridan, went to Bristol on a lecturing tour, and coming from Bristol the beginning of 1764, both visited Bath. During this visit Mrs. Sheridan made the acquaintance of Sarah Fielding, who lived in a small house between Bath and Batheaston;† and she visited Allen, at Prior Park. She also took lessons in singing from Linley, and so commenced an acquaintance which was presently to be renewed.

Mr. Sheridan gave his lectures at Foote's theatre in London, "a miscellaneous species of amusement, consisting of recitations, singing and music," under the high sounding name of "An Attic Evening's Entertainment."‡ Foote quickly burlesqued these lectures in a farce called, "The Orators." Herein a soap boiler being ambitious to join the City Council, his wife tells him he must first learn to make speeches, when just opportunely the master professor of the art of oratory comes to the city with his lectures. Husband and wife attend, and are "told such things about verbs, and nouns, and adverbs and emphasis and accents," that never entered their heads before. As showing the difference in time, during the evening a gentleman in a box cries:--Holloo! Snuffers, snuffers, snuffers. Whereupon enter the—Candle Snuffer—with—Your pleasure, sir. Mr. Sheridan being presently harried by creditors, was obliged to leave London, and taking a circuitous route got to Dover, then over to France and so to Blois. From Blois, after a visit to Paris, he moved to St. Quentin where he purposed leaving his children in the hands of Protestants to whom he had been strongly recommended.§ Here Mrs. Sheridan died

\* "The Cabinet," 1803. † Lefanu, "Life of the Sheridans."

‡ Watkins' "Life of R. B. Sheridan."

§ "European Maga.," Vol. 32, p.p. 11, 12.



and was allowed burial in a Protestant cemetery. Writing from Blois, 1st August, 1766, he says :—"Mrs. Sheridan has writ a comedy called 'A Trip to Bath,' in which some good judges in England find a great deal of merit." This little thing obtained the sanction of Garrick and Murphy, and through them it was believed that Dr. Johnson perused it and gave his judgment decidedly in its favour. Notwithstanding this high approval it was never acted nor published. Three acts in manuscript are preserved for us, and hereon it must be noted the title reads, "A Journey to Bath; a Comedy."\* It has always, however, been mentioned, and so is better known, under the first title, "A Trip to Bath." The whole thus preserved is contained in 70 pages, or 37 leaves including the title. The scenes are laid in Bath, on the Parade, and in Spring Gardens, and the third act shows the Rooms with different parties at cards, one table to be filled with children at "Lottery Tickets." The influence of this play may perhaps be traced in her son's comedy "The Rivals." The same son wrote another comedy known now as "The School for Scandal," but which in its first state was named "The Slanderrers; A Pump Room Scene."† This son, known as Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was born in Dublin, says one account, on the 30th October, 1751,‡ and baptized on the 4th of November in the parish church of St. Mary.§

Moore, in his life of him, actually begins his first lines with an error when he says he was born in September, 1751, in Dublin, and baptized on the 4th of the following month, which would be October. Then with one account is given a literal extract from the registers, as reading :—"Richard Brinsley, son of Thoma and Frances Sheridan, baptized November, 4th, 1751."|| Another account gives it, "as appears from the following extract from the

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\* Brit. Mus. : Add MSS.    † Earle's "Bath."

‡ L. Sanders' "Life of Sheridan."    § Watkins' "Memoirs of Sheridan."

|| "Life of R. B. Sheridan" (Anon.).

register of St. Mary's, Dublin" :—" Richard Brinsley, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sheridan, baptized 4th November, 1751."\* And another, so late as 1886,† gives a similar "extract." But the Mr. and Mrs. will not pass as so extracted. These later notices are clearly not extracts but only copied variants from the first. In these researches it is rarely possible to learn the date of birth, but the date of baptism is an authenticated fact, and as this ceremony took place as soon as convenient after the birth, the birth date here late in October would be nearer the truth than one in September. One other account of 1812 says he was born at Quilca, near Dublin, in 1752.‡ Besides that Quilca is not near Dublin; it was his father, Thomas, who was born there on a farm the property of his mother, who was a Miss McPherson.§ Finally, but most remarkable, the latest biography|| seems to show that neither of these former statements could have been really literally extracted as in the register as seen and read by the author, the name is entered as Thomas Brinsley, not Richard. In due time, by reason of his father's better position after the pension grant, Richard, as he must be called, was sent to Harrow School, where he was considered careless and indolent, although at times giving evidence of a "quick ingenuity." So presently this "elegant sluggard" was sent into the world to do the best he could for himself.¶

In 1770, about October, Mr. Thomas Sheridan, now a widower with daughters and two sons, moved to Bath, his intention being to carry on his business there and lecture on elocution. Here, as being both public entertainers, the earlier acquaintance with Linley was soon renewed, and even business relations commenced; this being all made further mutually agreeable by the presence of the young people of both families. What exactly Mr. Sheridan

\* "Authentic Memoirs of R. B. S." † Fitzgerald.

‡ "Biographica Dramatica." § "Hist. and Biog. Maga.," Vol. 2.

|| "Sheridan," a biography, by W. Fraser Rae.

¶ "Life of R. B. S.," Lefanu.

did, or intended, towards establishing himself, may best be learned by giving his first advertisement in full. This reads\* :—

At Simpson's Concert Room on Saturday next, 24th instant will be the first Attic Entertainment, consisting of reading and singing, the reading part by Mr. Sheridan, the singing by Miss Linley. In three parts. Part i. 1. A discourse on Oratory in which the necessity of that art towards forwarding the perfection of man's nature is shewn in a new light by Mr. Sheridan. 2. A Scotch ballad beginning : I oft have heard Mary say—by Miss Linley. 3. Pope's verses to the memory of an unfortunate lady, by Mr. Sheridan. Part ii. 1. Two dialogues between Adam and Eve from the 4th book of Paradise Lost, the first beginning at line 411, and the other at line 508. 2. Elin a Roön, an Irish song by Miss Linley. 3. Milton's Allegro, by Mr. Sheridan.

Part iii. 1. The Hermit from Dr. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield, by Mr. Sheridan. 2. Black eyed Susan an English ballad, by Miss Linley. 3. Dryden's Ode, by Mr. Sheridan. 4. Rosey Bowers, from Purcel, by Miss Linley.

The entertainment will be continued on the Thursday and Saturday in the following week and the pieces and songs will be entirely different each day, the particulars of which will be mentioned in the bills previous to each performance. The subscription to be a guinea for which six tickets will be delivered two for each morning or to be used on any of the days in such proportions as the subscribers shall think proper. Three subscription tickets for ladies only will be delivered for half a guinea, single tickets 5s. each. Subscriptions will be received and tickets delivered by the Booksellers, at the Coffee Houses, and at the Rooms.

On the 27th December another advertisement† announced that on monday, the 7th January, 1771, this attic entertainment would be repeated, the reading again by Mr. Sheridan, the singing by Miss Linley, and to be continued on the two following mondays.

\* *Bath Chronicle*, 22nd November, 1770, p 3, col. 2.

† *Bath Chronicle*, p. 3, col. 4.

The subscription was a guinea, for which now one gentleman's and two ladies' tickets were issued for each day, or the nine to be used all on one day as the subscriber thought proper. Three tickets to admit either gentlemen or ladies for half a guinea. Single tickets at a "crown" each. To begin each morning at half past eleven.

To this there was a note added, that —

Mr. Sheridan is now ready to receive the commands of such persons as wish to have their children regularly instructed in the art of reading and reciting and in the grammatical knowledge of the English language upon the terms formerly advertised and by the desire of several gentlemen whose sons have returned home during the holidays he will immediately receive pupils at his own house in Kingsmead Street till a proper place shall be fitted up for their accommodation.

On the 3rd January, 1771, another advertisement\* announced that Mr. Sheridan proposed to give a new course of three attic entertainments. The pieces of composition both in poetry and prose to be for the most part different from those delivered in the former course, as also a variety in the songs. The first entertainment was to be on monday, the 7th January, to be continued on the two following mondays. The subscription and time of commencement as before. By reason of Mr. Sheridan's sudden indisposition the first for the 7th January was deferred until monday, the 13th (? 14th), and an advertisement† of the 10th January announced that to finish the course in the time first proposed, the second and third would be on the saturday and monday following. Such subscribers as this alteration may not suit were at liberty to have their subscriptions back. A slight addition to the former notices, requested of the company to come early to prevent interruption, as the entertainment would begin precisely at the time mentioned.

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\* Page 3, col. 1.    † *Bath Chronicle*, p. 2, col. 4.

On the 17th January a final advertisement\* gives fuller particulars of the performance at the second entertainment for the 19th. It was as before in three parts. Part i. 1. Some passages from Milton's *Lycidas*. 2. A song beginning: One day I heard Mary say. 3. Grey's verses on the distant prospect of Eton College. Part ii. 1. Mallet's *Edwin and Emma*. 2. The noon-tide air, a song. 3. The two soliloquies, *Hamlet* and *Cato*. Part iii. 1. A Scotch song, called, *Low down i' the broom*. 2. A discourse on the powers of oratory with regard to the improvement of human nature. 3. *Mad Bess*, from *Purcell*. To this there was now an additional note that particular care will be taken to have the room made as warm as possible.

Notwithstanding the judicious aid and the excellent advertisement by the association with the popular Miss Linley this entertainment seems to have been unsuccessful. The programme certainly does not read as very strong. Of Mr. Sheridan it is recorded that he was pedantic, and as a reader was "elaborate, noisy, and sonorous, varying merely his tones," and presumably did not generally attract. Dr. Johnson is credited with the remark that Mr. Sheridan's mode of oratory, if followed, would clear a room. But the programmes give a desired information, some idea of the musical style or practice of Miss Linley which is here seen to be the ballad. On other occasions with her sisters, as a family all were foremost in the oratorio. Mr. Sheridan does not again appear locally prominent. It is only known that he had certainly one pupil, the Hon. George Grenville, afterwards 2nd Earl Temple and 1st Marquess of Buckingham, who boarded with him in 1771 as hoping to be cured of a stammer or some difficulty in speech. He came again in 1772 accompanied, for pleasure only, by his brother Thomas, whose well-known library now graces the British Museum. Mr. Sheridan continued resident at Bath, travelling when required, reading his

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\* *Bath Chronicle*, p. 3, col. 1.

lectures to subscribers and giving private lessons to pupils, being assisted by his son Charles, and so getting a living "sometimes abundant and sometimes meagre,"\* until about October, 1772.

Miss Linley, on her first appearance in the Bath concert room, was much admired both as a charming girl and for her voice; and two years later with a little more development, when only fourteen she was dubbed "an angel" and was known as the Syren.† Receiving the highest praises everywhere, complimented in private, and applauded in public for her singing; of her beauty it was written that tenderest sensibility was the character of her countenance, the most perfect proportion that of her frame; it was impossible to contemplate her without affection.‡ Her accents were so melodious that listening Envy would have dropped her snakes and stern eyed Fury's self have melted at the sounds.§ Pages of this sort of thing could be quoted. Thus 'sung by bards,' she was soon "fought for by heroes."

The story of her wooers is a sad one. The life of this young girl in her teens was made unbearable.|| Of these troublers three only need be mentioned here. Mr. Walter Long,¶ a gentleman of property, declared himself and with every honourable intention. As his income was estimated at £10,000 a year, the parents received the proposal with rapture, but Miss was not so willing, yet, after some pressure consent was nominally obtained, and the usual preparations made for the wedding, when the young lady made excuse and resolutely refused to proceed further.¶¶ She pleaded that she could not give up her public appearances and yet this very thing, the exhibiting her person for money, was the one thing she most disliked. The difference in age, she was sixteen and he was sixty, was also pleaded. In the end the young lady

\* "Life of Frances Sheridan." † *London Magazine*, Vol. 27.

‡ *New Lady's Magazine*, Vol. 7.

§ *Historical and Biographical Magazine*, Vol. 2. || Oliphant.

¶ "Sheridan," by an Octogenarian.

¶¶ "Craftsman," 10th October, 1772, p. 4.

so persuaded Mr. Long that he most kindly undertook to bear all the odium of the breaking off, and further paid the father £1000 as compensation for the temporary loss of his daughter's valuable services during the engagement. Later this sum by Mr. Long's generosity was extended to £3000,\* which was placed in the father's hands, settled on the young lady to be paid when she became of age. Besides this she had jewels to the value of £1000 and other valuable presents.† This episode attracted much public attention, nothing else was talked of at Bath. Great was the envy of the ladies and great the chagrin and disappointment among the young men when the engagement was known.‡ Foote made the whole the ground of a comedy called "The Maid of Bath," a name by which the damsel was well known, and in the dialogue she appears as Miss Linnet, an adopted play upon her name. Mr. Long is unkindly portrayed, and accused of decamping and changing his mind at the last moment.§ He appears as Solomon Flint, an amorous old squire, and the epilogue speaks of him as—

The rake of sixty, crippled hand and knee,  
Who sins on claret, and repents on tea.

This is now seen to be too severe and untrue. Mr. Long lived to a good old age.|| Here may be noticed another of the often careless inaccuracies, when in an account of Mr. Long it is written that "though the son of a carpenter now living at Bath" he was a man of good fortune.¶ Mr. Long was never other than he here appears to be. It was Linley, the father of the young lady, who was the son of a carpenter.

The younger Sheridan, Richard, who had joined his family early in 1771¶¶ fresh from his tutor, often met Miss Linley and soon began to be gallant and soon perceived a mutual feeling.

\* "Octogenarian," p. 38. † Lefanu. ‡ Watkins.

§ *Bath Chronicle*, 27th June, 1771, p. 3, col. 3.

|| Stainforth's "Life of Sheridan." ¶ *London Magazine*, 1772.

¶¶ Sanders.



These two lovers were very young, he being barely twenty, she seventeen. As the youth had nothing, was without either profession, business, or means, and was trifling away his life in sheer idleness, Prudence, wrote one, might have dictated another choice as if Prudence dictated under such circumstances.

When the engagement with Mr. Long was off, one Nathaniel Halhed, a schoolfellow of Richard Sheridan, and now a student at Oxford, hoped to obtain the notice and favour of the damsel, and some correspondence was carried on with her, Richard being the go-between; but it happened that expected letters failed from time to time to reach Halhed, and presently just when he received an appointment under the East India Company, he was made to see that he had no chance. So he was quietly choked off. Then Charles Sheridan, the elder brother, tried and hoped also, until presently he too surprised found himself superseded when he retired to the country some seven or eight miles from Bath. So in turn he was got rid of. The position of the youngsters towards each other becoming known and the prospect being so opposite to the first possibility for his daughter, the passion of papa Linley, who had ambitious views, was not the passion of the lovers, and curiously the objection of the youth's papa was equally determined. Both parents protesting strongly all meetings were forbidden and every means used to prevent them. Still as usual meetings did occur. Among the earliest of the family acquaintances at Bath was Mr. Thomas Mathews, who, having been in the army, is sometimes called Captain Mathews, who was at this time a rather new resident. Richard Sheridan early became the genial and inseparable companion of Mathews, and from the close intimacy between the three families, visits being constantly exchanged at their respective houses, young Sheridan often met his inamorata at Mathew's house.\* So commenced the first act in a strange

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\* *London Magazine*, 1772, Vol. 41.



eventful comedy, almost a tragedy. At this time of social gaiety Sheridan's mind showed that tendency to comedy literature which developed a little later. There happened to be issued at Bath a sketch called "The Bath Picture," by Richard Fitzpatrick, *i.e.*, Miles Peter Andrews, and this, under the signature of Asmodeo, Sheridan answered with "Clio's Protest or the Picture Varnished," the last eight lines in this beginning "Marked you her eye, &c.," alluding in praise to Lady Margaret Fordyce, were set to music. Lady Margaret was the sister of Lady Anne Fordyce, the author of "Auld Robin Gray."\* This has somewhat a further local interest, as Auld Robin Gray was set to music by Mr. Leeves, rector of Wrington. Another little humorous sketch by Sheridan was called "The Ridotto," in style after Anstey, written on the opening of the new Assembly Rooms, September, 1771. A ridotto was a "bal paré" or in semi-evening dress. It was first printed in the *Bath Chronicle*, October, 1771, and was then issued in ballad slip form, price one penny, but although the demand required a large issue, not a copy seems to have survived. It was re-issued in 1773, and later in a work entitled "The New Foundling Hospital for Wit," Vol. I., and has been thus saved to us. It was further re-printed in 1819.

There was also some sort of joint literary scheme between Sheridan and his friend Halhed at Oxford. The plan advanced so far that Halhed made a translation of a pretended Greek author or writer, who assumed the name of Aristœnetus, which he published in 8vo. in 1771. The title was:—

"The Love Epistles of Aristœnetus," translated from the Greek into English metre.

The preface is signed "H.S.," which has been supposed to mean Halhed Sheridan, but Sheridan's work was only to read such of the translation that Halhed sent to him. Halhed speaks of the

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\* A Lefanu.

work as "my" Aristœnetus. A nominal second edition appeared in 1773, simply a re-issue with a new title page and the last page re-printed. The thing was a failure, "monkish trash on which the translator had ill-spent his time."

At this time, too, Sheridan showed that cleverness and ingenuity which had served him so well at Harrow, and which served him constantly through life. Thoughtless of consequences he managed without means to appear in a style of elegance which astonished those who were acquainted with his finances,\* and so he managed to associate intimately with Mathews and other gentlemen of fashion and extravagance, men of leisure and of pleasure, and to keep up the tendency of his nation to conviviality, and the social enjoyments of the table and wine, "too early indulged in and in after life too freely pursued."

But meanwhile the young lady, prominent from her public position, and as the general theme of conversation, was followed by all the young men of fashion at Bath, all proud to be in the list of her admirers.† The poor, penniless lover was consequently always facing the number and wealth of these possible rivals, and watching the temptations to which his lady-love was exposed. His mind was thus kept full of jealous fears and in a perpetual state of unrest, well calculated to develop other national characteristics, the hasty temper and hot quick passion unrestrained by judgment. Mathews, as an early friend of the Linley family, had also become the earlier friend and companion of Miss Linley. Their frequent appearance in public together presently attracted the notice of the censorious, who considered this indiscreet, Mathews being already married, and, in the fashionable set at Bath. Such watchful censors are easily found to-day, but here the position was clearly very difficult, as the young lady being a public character must have been known by sight to everyone, and generally could not move without being watched. As in all such

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\* "Imposter Unmasked," by Patricius. † Beau Monde.

cases their being together must have been mutually agreeable. What Linley was for Mathews, Mathews was for Linley, and perhaps his presence kept off others not desired. The young damsel too, was certainly unfortunate, being the eldest of her family, with a father severe and exacting and a mother who seems to have been entirely unsympathetic. She thus apparently had absolutely no other male friend. Ladies at this date did not go out without escort so it does not follow that Mathews and Miss Linley were always alone, but they were often in company together. Bath, too, was not without fame for the invention and circulation of slander, or we should not now be able to read—"The School for Scandal." At first then, insinuations and surmises were circulated, "sharpened by the malice of the women, who envied the pretty warbler both her charms and her popularity"; "the old ladies condemned in very affecting language," and the young ones chose to "wonder at the laxity of their sister, in walking about with a married man." But besides the spite of the women there was the jealousy of those men who wished to gain her affection or even some attention, but who were thus barred from approach. What, ever the restless eyes of the censors may have seen or their small minds imagined it must be noted that the general family intimacy continued and was never interrupted. Mathews' attentions were not noticeable, there was nothing to cause suspicion or distrust, nothing was said or noted in either family. The young lady herself was entirely ignorant of any gossip and was also quite "innocent of having given cause for it." To quote a note of the time which well shows the exact position—"the censorious were very anxious for virtue without knowing whether it was in danger."\* Now comes the curious error upon which the future story rests, Mathews when he learned of the gossip and the remarks made about him, instead of withdrawing or taking care even for the damsel's sake, did exactly the wrong thing. Either proud of

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\* Craftsman, 10th October, 1772.

the position or treating the gossip with contempt, he fanned eth notoriety by increasing his courteous attentions in proportion as the matter attracted notice.\* This at last raised the fiend of jealousy in the breast of young Sheridan, who with youthful ardour and a feeling of being privileged, ventured to protest and expostulate with his friend hoping he would modify his conduct. Thus originated the difference between these two which produced such notoriety for both and for Bath in connection with them. Seized by this jealous frenzy, in a state of captious unsatisfied temper and ill-directed imagination, every action, every attention or courtesy to the young lady became mystified into a terror, the lover's "days were hours of care, his nights of watchfulness." Having got rid in former time of his friend Halhed and after him of his own brother, he could no longer brook even the semblance of a rival in the young girl's mind, so he proceeded to get rid of Mathews by making him odious first in her eyes and then trying to do the same in the eyes of all Bath. Using his opportunities he put the story in its worst form before Miss Linley, who became greatly depressed at this new trouble. Mathews, her only male friend, was thus got rid of in turn, and the young lady was consequently entirely isolated. Taking advantage of her hatred of her profession and her equally hated bondage to her father, the youth now persuaded her that flight alone would save her from these troubles. She did not consult her father, we are told, fearing his anger ; so he was another kept out of the way. It happened, too, just now that Mr. Sheridan the papa was called away to Ireland, so he also was out of the way, when the son seized the opportunity of persuading the girl to elope.† The affair being thus determined and arranged, to give confidence at the start, young Sheridan engaged a woman servant to act "propriety" as a third party, and whilst she waited in a post chaise in Walcot Street on the

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\* Watkins.    † Watkins.

London road the "bold" protector conducted the young lady in a chair from her house in the Crescent and off they went. The *London Chronicle* of Tuesday, 24th March, 1772, under date from Bath, 23rd March, says—on Wednesday (*i.e.*, 18th March): "The eldest Miss Linley, of this city, justly celebrated for her musical abilities, set off with Mr. Sheridan, jun., on a matrimonial excursion to Scotland." Such would be the first impression with everyone. This affair again brings up thoughts of cleverness on one side or easiness in business matters on the other, or how did this extravagant youth without any apparent means manage to plan thus and start with post horses and a servant for London and beyond. In connection with this point it has never been remembered that the young lady could hardly have been without means, as besides her important earnings from which she may have had pocket money, she had in her own right the money investment settled by Mr. Long. On arriving in London the runaways spent a night with a friend, Mr. Ewart, a brandy merchant. From here Sheridan seems to have written to Bath and giving his route plan, which, however, as may be expected, he did not follow. Leaving the propriety duenna behind, aided by Mr. Ewart's shipping interest the couple next crossed to Dunkirk. From here they proceeded to Lille where the young lady was deposited or got herself deposited as a boarder in a convent.

Thus so far this story is told, from contemporary sources, for the first time; told just as Bath must have known it at the time. With this knowledge of cause or causes the way in which it has been since told will be better understood.

Sheridan died in 1816, when some short notices of his life appeared, and in 1817 Dr. Watkins published a fuller account. A more extended biography being thought necessary the material collected was handed to Thomas Moore to edit and his work, published in 1825, became the accepted authority on the subject. But it must be distinctly remembered and under-

stood that he did not write this Bath part of his story from contemporary or authentic documents, but published, almost in its entirety, a long account sent from Mrs. Henry Lefanu, who was further Sheridan's sister Elizabeth, written from attempted revived recollections over 50 years after the events, and by a lady nearly 70, who was but a girl of only 12 or 13 at the time.

Recently although Sheridan has been long dead and long forgotten, another biography has boldly appeared wherein this Lefanu letter is again fully used and relied upon.\* Moore using the narrative often almost word for word prints without inverted commas, thus giving a greater appearance of originality to his book. The last work very properly uses these marks, thus enabling the reader to well distinguish the new and the old. Both these issues must now be glanced at. First a new form is given to the elopement as we are now told that Miss Linley, terrified at the attentions of Mathews, consulted the Misses Sheridan, and they, in turn consulted their brother, and that Miss Linley had conceived the idea of retiring to a convent in France until she came of age, meaning to indemnify her father with part of her compensation money. Sheridan chose to accept the idea and offered to be her conductor "as a friend without any desire to take advantage as a lover,"† thus appearing according to his sister's estimate as a trusted "advisor" and "protector" entirely without guile. It is difficult to realise this convent story as being supported by any adviser, an imagined retreat for four years in a place the young girl had never seen and of which she could know nothing, and further that the father would not be equally angry and spoil all equally here as at home, and then that the youth was taking this disinterested trouble simply to wait for four years somewhere outside when he could do that as well or better at home. But so it was. Having the idea the young girl was worked upon as if carrying out her

\* Rae.      † Moore.

own plan, and the youth accepted it as suiting his, to get away, to make a start, and let the result follow. Then, it may be remembered, that the four advisers in council were—Miss Linley, herself just seventeen, Miss Sheridan about the same age, and her sister, the writer of the letter with this story, only thirteen, and the penniless lover-brother, the chief actor and worker, but twenty. Yet the biographies write glibly of these events, without explanation, as if these young things were fully grown and had some little common sense, almost as if the affair were blameless and a worthy example for others. As soon as they were well abroad the chivalrous and disinterested protector became “more explicit” mildly writes the lady sister, “degenerated into a mere selfish lover” as Moore plainly puts it, and so pressed the usual argument that after the step they had taken she could not possibly appear again in England but as his wife, or as the latest biography elaborates it, “the same eloquence which had been used to persuade her to leave Bath was employed to persuade her to become his wife in order to silence the tongue of scandal.” Accordingly, continues the same, but without the slightest evidence, “they were married by a priest well-known for such occasions.” It can be said with equal certainty that they were not. Dr. Watkins, in 1817, says distinctly there was no marriage at this time and this will be borne out by facts. Whatever may have exactly happened the poor young girl was strong enough to resist all blarney, and on reaching Lille carried out her plan and got herself deposited as a boarder in a convent, and so at once was safe from further persistence. Here in a place so strange and new and in a foreign unknown country she became ill naturally enough and so next, passed first to the professional care and then to the house and protection of an English medico resident at Lille.

As soon as the elopement was discovered the landlord of the house in which the Sheridans lived went off at break of day to inform Charles Sheridan at his retreat in the country, Mr.



Sheridan, as already stated, being away. A great stir too arose in Bath. Mathews busied himself to find out where the fugitives had gone, and called naturally enough on the Sheridans as being most likely to know. Here Charles Sheridan agreed with him in condemning his brother's conduct and both used the strongest language about him, not only did these two agree, but Sheridan's father presently agreed with them, and was, perhaps, more severe. In the course of their chat, Charles, we are told, "unguardedly" dropped these expressions of displeasure. As all his expressions must have been of the same tenor why "unguardedly," is not clear. Sheridan left behind him letters against Mathews charging him with designing the seduction of Miss Linley, thus throwing the blame of the elopement upon him and claiming for himself the virtuous roll of saving the girl from the snares of vice and dissimulation. Whilst the whereabouts was unknown Mathews constantly called on the Sheridans, or as Lefanu puts it rather sharply—he never ceased for the four or five weeks the youngsters were absent—to haunt the family with inquiries, rumours, and other disturbing visitations.\* In the new biography this sentence is echoed and becomes—this incomprehensible man continued to plague the Sheridans with visits and inquiries.† Why should this or the man be considered incomprehensible. In such a case it may be concluded that others also must have made inquiry. Mathews, the intimate friend of Mr. Linley and the familiar of the lost girl, was angry enough as any other would be, and was certainly the first to be justified in his anxiety. Lefanu's account makes this conduct as of the worst as "almost avowing in his rage the unprincipled design" which this elopement had frustrated.‡ The "almost" here must be noted in this pretty insinuation. In the last version this is improved, the "almost" is dropped and then we are told as if a fact—he was outrageous and made no scruple of avowing his passion and

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\* Moore 53.    † Rae 173.    ‡ Moore 53.



hopes of success but for this intervention. Yet there is not one tittle of evidence shown for such an assertion. Then in the course of elaboration the story descends to "He is said." He "is said" to have added the menace of ruining her character if she refused him.\* So we have the usual scandal corner with "They say," "They do say," "It is whispered," "It is said," and so on. Yet this gossip is printed and reprinted and so re-asserted for acceptance as fact without further consideration or thought.

But all this time neither of the biographies has given a thought to Mr. Linley. What must have been the father's state when he learned of this affair? Struck dumb with anguish, as he must have been at the thought that his universally beloved child, his own ambition, was gone, and gone, too, for what, who could say. Doubt, grief, and horror must have been his, and it may well be imagined and hoped that others must have been as sadly pained and shocked as was Mathews. Gone with this extravagant and useless youth, who had worked this against the declared wishes of both fathers, as utterly regardless of consequences as the worst of men could have been, a pretended adviser and protector, who had taken this young girl from her home in the midst of panegyric and applause, in the height of her prosperity and renown, broken and half ruined her father by thus depriving him of his daughter and of the ready resources her skill brought him, and taken her foreign he knew not whither. Mathews, Mr. Linley's intimate friend, against whom so far he knew no ill and had no ill-feeling, came with his sympathy and rage, and the reiterated question between them must have been—where are they? It was to get an answer to this question that Mathews busied himself, and yet even for this blame is thrown upon him. Soon the prejudicial report or charge against Mathews left behind or circulated by young Sheridan reached Mr. Linley and he, accepting it, thereupon refused to

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\* Moore 48.

see his old friend. "So, so, all over the town already." Vexed and hurt now here, as much as he was before. enraged, Mathews as a defence and a challenge against these tales publicly contradicted all by the following advertisement,\* which will give clearly the position from the other side :—

Bath, Wednesday, April 8, 1772.

Mr. Richard S . . . . . having attempted in a letter left behind him for that purpose to account for his scandalous method of running away from this place by insinuations derogating from *my* character and that of a young lady *innocent* as far as relates to *me* or *my knowledge*, since which he has neither taken any notice of letters or even informed his own family of the place where he has hid himself I can no longer think he deserves the treatment of a gentleman, and therefore shall trouble myself no further about him than in this public method to post him as a L(iar) and a *treacherous* S (coundrel). And as I am convinced there have been many malevolent incendiaries concerned in the propogation of this infamous lie, if any of them, unprotected by *age*, *infirmities* or *profession* will dare to acknowledge the part they have acted, and affirm *to*, what they have *of*, me, they may depend on receiving the proper reward of their villainy in the most public manner. The world will be candid enough to judge properly (I make no doubt) of any *private* abuse on this subject for the future, as nobody can defend himself from an accusation he is ignorant of.

THOMAS MATHEWS

This announcement (*i.e.*, the advertisement) says the last biography "was alike comical and absurd. Mathews arrogated to himself the right of debauching Miss Linley, and he treated as an enemy the young man who had thwarted him."† The comical thing here must be rather in this paragraph, as Mathews is not seen or shown as arrogating anything of the sort. As Sheridan was gone, address not known, the advertisement seems the only means at hand for self-vindication and for a public

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\* *Bath Chronicle*, 9th April, 1772, p. 3, col. 3.

† Rae, Vol. I., p. 174.

repudiation of what Mathews considered the slander clearly left behind him. Then as to the "young man" he was treated as an enemy simply because he had taken off this young girl to her ruin, perhaps, as many then thought and as many would think to-day, and had left behind an abusive letter and circulated an "infamous lie." It is actually further argued that by thus showing his anger Mathews acknowledged his defeat. How any such thought can be so read it is impossible to see. Such writing o'erleaps itself. The feeling raised against Mathews was for a time apparently very strong, and a better way of meeting it than this advertisement does not seem possible. Further\* a letter to Sheridan is given, dated 22nd March, 1772. No reference is made as to its whereabouts nor is the address noticed, but it is from one W.B., and evidently in reply to another from London from Sheridan, but Sheridan could not have received this in London. Now that herein the exact date of the elopement is given, viz., 18th March, it can be better understood. It says, "the morning after you left," this would be presumably the 19th, "Mathews came to me with many oaths; his present situation and feelings (i.e. on the 22nd) are not to be envied, but bad as he is the town has so little charity for him they make him worse perhaps than he deserves." So here it must be noted that this particular friend, obliged necessarily to write in an acceptable tone about Mathews, does not care to endorse the position as being deserved. In a further conversation with Mathews the writer ventured to suggest that he should leave Bath. This last suggestion is, perhaps, about as absurd as any could be as a means of meeting slander, as it would certainly have shown cowardice and weakness indeed. Instead of leaving Mathews inserted the advertisement, its cause being thus made clear.

The convent game being now over Sheridan presently wrote to his brother (15th April) that he hoped he had not been

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\* Rae, Vol. I., p. 171.

uneasy lest anything should tempt him to depart from the honour and consistency which engaged him from the first ; but the brother was not altogether with him on this point, as he wrote to his uncle—the circumstances might allow of their being dubious. There is also a letter extant from Mr. Sheridan “which shows his lack of charity,”\* whatever that may mean, and so it is not printed “inasmuch as he puts a much harsher construction on his younger son’s conduct than the elder had done.” Father and brother then were at least agreed with Mathews about this most reprehensible affair, and the father could write as harshly as the brother had “unguardedly” spoken. “As letters had been sent to Bath from Lille, Mr. Linley could not be ignorant where his daughter was to be found.’† This insinuation is not very kindly. Mr. Linley would not have rested a moment had he known where the girl was. He did not know as no letter had been received or sent from Lille. If the whereabouts was known why did Mathews “haunt” the Sheridans with inquiries for some weeks? It was not until the 15th April that Sheridan wrote, and we are told Mr. Linley arrived at Lille a few days after the “despatch” of the letter. Whilst Mr. Linley here clearly did not rest when he knew the whereabouts, so it must be remarked he would not start after the despatch, but after the delivery or receipt of the letter. Supposing it took four days it would be delivered on the 19th, just a month after the elopement. Money must have been getting short. Then Mr. Linley starting perhaps on the 20th would arrive at Lille about the 24th. On his arrival, restraining all show of anger and avoiding further rupture or opposition he did the amiable, and so after spending one night at Lille he departed with the lost one, and would be in Bath perhaps by the 30th April. Here must be noticed some

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\* Rae Vol. 1., 185.    † Rae, p. 171.

curious statements on this small business. Arriving at Lille, says Moore, Mr. Linley found the fugitives and took both back, "they set off amicably together," or as Mrs. H. Lefanu, from whom this is taken, writes—"The whole party set out together the next day" Then again\* we are told Sheridan arrived at Bath (whither he travelled with Miss Linley and her father), &c. Mrs. H. Lefanu goes one better, she writes—on arrival from the Continent Sheridan found Mathews was in London, &c., he left Miss Linley with her father at the hotel, and with pistols went to Mathews, who was surprised and alarmed at seeing him. This is too much even for the last biographer, who felt bound to remark that Mathews could hardly have been surprised as he must have expected something of the sort sooner or later. Dr. Watkin's account, written fortunately without the aid of Lefanu, says more truly, the damsel was "conveyed to England by her father, followed by her lover." Thus Mrs. Lefanu is wrong, they did not return together nor did they proceed to Bath together. The next narrative will explain and clear these points and show the value of Mrs. Lefanu's facts.

Here, then, Sheridan can tell his own story. He says† he arrived in London at nine o'clock at night (*i.e.*, on Friday, 1st May). He had spent the previous night at Canterbury, and there is no mention of anybody being with him. He had learned that Mathews had spoken disrespectfully of him during his absence, and now about ten o'clock, hearing that Mathews was in town he resolved, with national impetuosity, to call upon him that night. What he did for the next two hours is not in evidence, but at half-past twelve at night he appeared at the house in Crutched Friars where Mathews was lodging, pistols in pocket, to demand satisfaction. It is here Mrs. Lefanu makes out that he was surprised and alarmed. Surprised he might well be, but alarmed certainly not. As the door was locked, the house

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\* Moore. † Rae, p. 179. Moore, p. 54.

closed, as might be expected, the landlord refused admittance at such a time. Presently, however, Mathews came down to the door, and after some words retired again, but as the noise continued Mathews dressed and came down again, and so now at two o'clock in the morning the determined young man was admitted. To his great surprise, so contrary to his own intentions, Mathews received him courteously and to his further surprise evidently, as the words are in italics in his account, he asked him to "sit down." So these two were together, the pistols visible in Sheridan's pocket, until Mathews by diplomacy eventually pacified him, but it was seven o'clock in the morning before he got rid. In the course of this long interview, Mathews seems to have told the story of his own strong words and condemnation, and that Sheridan's brother, and another at Bath not named, had also spoken equally strong about him. With this idea the young man's wrath was turned on his brother, and he hastened off at once to Bath—post-chaise of no consequence—and arrived there the same evening. Mathews is even accused\* of having treasured up this against the brother to be used when required, as if such opportunity could have been imagined or foreseen. No accusation seems too foolish if against this man. Then Mrs. H. Lefanu writes that "he did not hesitate to assert that Charles was privy to the advertisement," but again this does not appear by the advertisement or anywhere in fact. When the brothers met in Bath a high quarrel at once ensued, but it would be about the strong words spoken in condemnation of Richard's conduct. After a long altercation the advertisement seems to have been produced—"Dick coming here saw the advertisement for the first time," wrote Charles. Charles could well and safely deny having had any part in this, but it at once diverted Richard's wrath again to Mathews, his brother was forgiven, peace ensued

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\* Rae.

between them, and Charles adopting diplomacy agreed even to be the bearer of a challenge to Mathews. The two brothers now joined the family circle to the relief of all, and passed a short evening very amicably. This passed on Sunday night, says the last biography, relying as usual on Mrs. H. Lefanu, who is again wrong, as it was on Saturday night (2nd May). As soon as all had retired the two young men left the house, Richard having been in Bath, as by his own account, but three hours, and again there was a post-chaise back to town. Before he left Bath he wrote a letter at the Parade Coffee House to Mr. Wade, dated Saturday, 12 o'clock, 2nd May, 1772, "the evening before his second duel,"\* says Moore, but it was two evenings before the first—in which is a full account from his own point of view of the Crutched Friars meeting. Arriving in town (on Sunday, 3rd May) the young men were driven to Mr. Brereton's lodgings, "from whom a message was despatched to Mathews:"† This is Mrs. H. Lefanu again, and reads as if Mr. Brereton sent or took the message, but Charles himself tells that "the same evening" after their arrival (Sunday, 3rd May) he carried the challenge to Mathews to meet in Hyde Park next day. Ever ready to accuse and blacken Mathews, Richard chose to associate him with the house being closed and the denial of entry in Crutched Friars, and reported his conduct as the most craven and dastardly conceivable. An Irish song says of a neighbour:—

If you choose to call at his door  
And find that he isn't within  
He affronts you, the son of a whore,  
Ogh—make a round hole in his skin.

Looking now reasonably at this extraordinary freak neither lodgers nor landlords expect to be raided after midnight by a heated, angry and armed man. The wildest act of the wildest man in the wild west could hardly have intent more madly

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\* Moore, p. 54.      † Rae, p. 178.



outrageous. A duellist expects a different mode to this. Mathews clearly did right and diplomatised very patiently for five hours, thus avoiding increased anger and serious trouble. He could not wish to shoot or be shot in such a way. Charles in his mission remembering the "dastardly" conduct as told him by his brother had a notion of getting some concession from Mathews, but after two hours altercation he tells that he would "make no concessions." Just so. The position now was altogether different from the night attack on Crutched Friars. A demand for a duel brought in due form was duly accepted.

Accordingly Sheridan, with Mr. Ewart for his second, Mathews with Captain Knight, met in Hyde Park next day, monday, the 4th May, 1772, about six p.m., and one account says they fought there, but after wandering for some time no acceptable or suitable place could be fixed upon, so they returned through the streets and sought a tavern, but either their appearance or manner caused suspicion and they were more than once refused. In the end they met at the Castle Tavern, then at the north-west corner of Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, opposite Bedford Court.\* Bedford Court stands where it did and over against it is still the north-west corner of Henrietta Street where it joins Bedford Street, but the old houses are gone, the street is modern but lately rebuilt. In a first-floor room in this confined space in semi-darkness, by candle light, the two at once engaged with swords and soon Sheridan, unexpectedly making a rush in—contrary to rule—surprised and disarmed Mathews, and so was able to compel him to beg his life and give a written apology. The apology as printed in the *Bath Chronicle*, 7th May, 1772,† reads:—

"Being convinced that the expressions I made use of to Mr. Sheridan's disadvantage were the effects of passion and misrepre-

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\* "Authentic Memoirs," &c. † P. 3, col. 1.



sensation, I retract what I have said to that gentleman's disadvantage, and particularly beg his pardon for my advertisement in the *Bath Chronicle*."

THOMAS MATHEWS.

With this Sheridan hastened back to Bath the same night, taking no bed rest, to get it inserted in the *Bath Chronicle* as a counter or set off to the advertisement. Even in this small matter criticism becomes curious. First the statement that they fought in Hyde Park was followed by a newspaper report that on saturday morning (2nd May) Th—s M—th—s, Esq., and Mr. Sh—r—d—n met in Crutched Friars and came to an immediate decision of their well-known quarrel when the latter was run through the body and carried to Mr. E—s,\* Thames Street, where it appears the wound is not mortal. Mr. M—— is gone to France with Capt K—t,† his second. Then the *Bath Chronicle* of 7th May announced—"We can with authority contradict the account in the *London Evening Post* of last night‡ of a duel between Mr. M—t—ws and Mr. S—r—n as to the time (saturday, 2nd May) and event (*i.e.*, place and result) of their meeting, Mr. Sheridan being at this place on saturday, and both these gentlemen being here at present."§ It must be noticed that the writer of this paragraph alludes to the *Evening Post* of "last night," that was tuesday, the 5th May, so he was writing the paragraph on the 6th for the *Chronicle* issue on the 7th. He also only denies the time and event, simply that there had been no fight in Crutched Friars, nor on saturday the 2nd May, as Sheridan was at Bath on that day. In fact, he had just posted down. The meeting in Crutched Friars was on the night of friday, 1st May, the duel in the tavern was on monday evening, the 4th May. The two papers mixed somewhat two different events. The *Evening News* was rather too elaborate for the Crutched Friars

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\* Ewart's. † Knight.

‡ Tuesday, 5th May, 1772, p. 4, Col. 3. § *Chronicle*, 7th May.

event, and could not have had a report of the actual duel in time, whilst the *Chronicle* had the advantage of having the two accounts in hand and chose to be mysterious.

Next for other accounts. One says\* that Sheridan's second was his brother Charles, who held candles in his hands, as it was now dark. The *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1816, at the time of Sheridan's death, from which the above account is probably taken, says the same, as also does the *Times* on the same event. Mrs. H. Lefanu says that Mr. Brereton was the second, and that Charles Sheridan remained at Mr. Brereton's lodgings, and so was not even present. Sheridan's own account says it was Mr. Ewart who took up lights in his hand. Which of these accounts can be accepted? As Sheridan twice makes Mr. Ewart his second, and he certainly ought to know, Mrs. Lefanu is wrong again. Soon after the fight Mathews also returned to Bath and gave his account of the affair, differing from what Sheridan had reported. Sheridan at once contradicted boldly, Mathews he declared "misrepresented the whole transaction." The matter being officially investigated a statement was drawn up by Mr. Brereton, and agreed to and signed by Capt. Knight as correct, and was so acknowledged by Mr. Brereton, so that Sheridan gained nothing here, his statement was rejected and not found acceptable. But the feeling was against Mathews about his defeat; it was considered ungentlemanlike and unpardonable. Being thus obliged to leave Bath, he retired into Wales.

On arriving in England poor Mr. Linley determined to face the trouble and take his now soiled daughter to Bath again, hoping to stop the "wicked" suggestions going about, and here she was when Mathews left. Besides that every lover has a tendency to become a poet; at this date writing poetry was a pastime and fashionable amusement for those not in love. It was now in the

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\* Oliphant.

merry month of May, after a stolen meeting in a grotto, that Sheridan wrote the well-known lines :—

Uncouth is this moss-covered grotto of stone,  
And damp is the shade of the dew-dripping tree,  
Yet I this rude grotto with rapture will own  
And welcome, thy damps are refreshing to me.

The poem consists of twelve verses, of which the above is the first. It can be gathered from other verses that the young couple had a tiff. Jealous, as usual, he seems to have protested, but the young lady was not to be lectured, so he sullen, and both vexed, they did not leave the grotto together :—

And tell me, thou willow, with leaves dripping dew,  
Did Laura seem vexed when Horatio was gone.

In 1777 Mrs. Sheridan, as she then had become, was at Bath on a visit to her father, says Moore, but it would be to her grandfather, when Sheridan again addressed her in poetic form :—

But where does Laura pass the lonely hours,  
Does she still haunt the grot and willow tree ?

And still addressing Laura he writes :—

Once on a blossomed crowned day,  
Of mirth inspiring May,  
Silvio beneath the willow's sober shade,  
In sullen contemplation laid.

By this allusion the time or date of this grotto poem is made clear.

Chafing under the social coldness Mathews was, or chose to feel, insulted by the insertion of his apology in the newspapers. Supported in this by Mr. Barnett, who considered his position somewhat unmerited, he suddenly returned to Bath at the end of June to demand the usual satisfaction, and at once sent Sheridan strongly worded letters requiring a signed paper certifying the propriety of his conduct in the late duel ; or satisfaction. The challenge was accepted. The second meeting which ensued,

being a local event and of an extraordinary character, has added much local colour and interest to this story. Mrs. Henry Lefanu wrote that this duel occurred on Claverton Down, and this Moore accepted and has handed down without thought or investigation, notwithstanding that he had before him documents, which he quotes, telling a different tale. Everyone in Bath knows Claverton Down, as it is always in evidence, and this lady writer, writing after years had elapsed, remembered this name, perhaps did not know more or did not think of historical exactness. So, then, thanks to Mrs. Lefanu, we have the well-known story of the fight on Claverton Down, and that Sheridan wounded was carried to the White Hart Hotel. Very lately there has been a further addition to the story, which happens to be really delightful. Here we are told that after the meeting "Sheridan was taken to the nearest place of succour, which happened to be the White Hart Inn, the inn that still stands at the foot of Widcombe Hill. It is erroneously supposed he was brought to the old White Hart of Pickwick and Sam Weller fame, that stood on the site of the present Grand Hotel."\* Thus boldly all previous writers are flatly contradicted, and this without giving any authority or reference, apparently only because there happens to be a White Hart Inn at the foot of Widcombe Hill. It happens also, and very unfortunately for this new discovery, that the Claverton Down story is all untrue. The duel took place on Kingsdown.

First, as to the question of the actual day for the event. Moore is responsible again for the present error. He writes—"The *Bath Chronicle* on the day after the duel, July 2nd, &c."—and thus causing the date of the duel to be read as the 2nd July. The proper form for the reference would have been—"The *Bath Chronicle* of the 2nd July, the day after the duel, &c.," and all would have been clear,

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\* Meehan's "Memorable Houses," p. 25.

as the *Chronicle* of Thursday, the 2nd July, published early in the morning could not contain news of that morning, it must have gone to press sometime late on wednesday. The duel took place then on the 1st July, not the 2nd, as usually stated. Gathering now the facts, the combatants and their seconds met at the White Hart Hotel, where chaises were to be ready at three o'clock in the morning of wednesday, the 1st July, 1772\*; they next drove to the top of Kingsdown, where at four o'clock they encountered. It was agreed that each might have a friend as his second, but it was further specially agreed that neither second was to interfere under any circumstances "whatever might be the consequences."† Sheridan's friend was a Mr. or Captain Paumier; Mathews had Mr. Barnett. Thus the intention is clear this fight was for both a life struggle, one was to die. Arrived on the top of Kingsdown a fierce fight commenced, which for "intense animosity and frantic violence" has hardly been paralleled.‡ Mathews had a conviction that Sheridan would rush him as before, and he proposed that pistols should be used; but this Sheridan declined. drew and called on Mathews to do so. At first Sheridan was baffled, and Mathews had the advantage. Then, again, forgetting rule, Sheridan attempted his first plan, rushed on Mathews,§ closed, and both stumbling both fell, and the swords of both were broken in the fall. Sheridan, the first to make the move, at first was uppermost, or as Mr. Sheridan papa wrote—at first my son had the advantage, having thrown Mathews down,|| but Mathews, seven or eight years the elder, and so the heavier man, getting the top could not be removed. Whilst struggling thus, both hacked at each other with the piece or hilt end of the sword which he had retained, Sheridan's being the shorter piece could not be very effective,

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\* *Chronicle*. † *Craftsman*, 10th October, 1772.

‡ Octogenarian. § Lefanu. Rae, p. 197. || Rae, p. 204.

and Mathews' piece longer was too long to be effectually used, as swords are not sharp for cutting towards the hilt. Presently Mathews, being able to reach out, got hold of a pointed end, thus gaining a useful weapon, and, first having offered Sheridan his life, which he refused, he presently stabbed and pinned him through the ear and neck. Finding that resistance ceased he exclaimed, "I have done for him"—rose, and being himself not much hurt, chiefly\* a wound in the left part of the belly, entered one of the chaises in waiting, with four horses, and drove off, accompanied by his second, for London,† and so presently he crossed to France, there to await until the great storm raised by the affair had subsided.‡ Sheridan, who had received besides his ear wound three or four other wounds in his face, breast and sides,§ and with his hand cut, was assisted to his chaise,|| showing hardly a sign of life, and driven off rapidly, accompanied in turn by his own second, to the White Hart Hotel—a painful ride for a man in a state of collapse. So ended this most unmanly struggle. Two surgeons, Mr. Sharpe, and Mr. Ditcher a friend of the family, were sent for and quickly attended, but would not allow him to be further removed. The next morning his sisters "found the situation from noise and heat so uncomfortable they obtained leave to remove him to his own house." As the White Hart Hotel at this date was never asleep, could hardly have been quiet, especially if on the ground floor either by night or day this removal must have been a great relief. On the 7th July a London paper announced that by private letter from Bath had come the information the general opinion of the faculty was that Mr. Sheridan would not recover from the wounds he received in the duel¶; but, two days later, on the 9th July, it was

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\* Moore. † "Historical and Biographical Magazine."

‡ *General Evening Post*, 4th July, 1772.

§ *Chronicle*. || Moore. ¶ *General Evening Post*.

announced differently that he was then out of danger.\* Some weeks passed, however, before his confinement ceased.

Before considering the general reports on this duel, another example of the curious differences in a story may be noted as in part it relates to Mr. Ditcher. During the first residence of the Sheridans in Henrietta Street, London, a daughter Anne Elizabeth, their last child, was born; "who married Mr. Ditcher, a surgeon of Bath"† Another account says this child was named Anne, after the daughter of Samuel Richardson, who married Mr. Ditcher, surgeon, of Bath.‡ By the first statement it would seem that Anne Sheridan was married to Mr. Ditcher, by the other it is not clear whether Mr. Ditcher married Anne Sheridan or Anne Richardson, but as Anne Sheridan would have been hardly old enough this reading must be wrong, and so it must be intended that Anne Richardson was married to Mr. Ditcher. Then, turning to another notice, the latest, the confusion increases as we are told that Samuel Richardson, the novelist, who was a friend of the Sheridans, had daughters Mary and Anne. Mary married, in 1757, Philip Ditcher, a surgeon, of Bath. She died a widow in 1783. Anne died unmarried.§ The decision of the points does not form part of the present purpose, so may be left to anyone interested. But there is still another Bath interest here, as Samuel Richardson married for his second wife Elizabeth, sister of James Leake, the Bath bookseller. She died 3rd November, 1773, aged 77.

Some notes or authorities in full may now be quoted to close the story of the duel. First Mrs. Lefanu, who is again wrong, writes of this event as some time in June.|| The *Bath Chronicle* published on thursday, the 2nd July, says—"This morning at 3 o'clock was fought on Kingsdown, &c." This

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\* *Chronicle.* † "La Belle Assemblée," Vol. 29. N.S., p. 48.

‡ Lefanu. § "Dict. Nat. Biog." || Rae, p. 200.



morning here refers to the day the paragraph was written, which was wednesday, the 1st July. The *Bath Journal* also gives the place as Kingsdown. For the purpose of having an official accurate account the depositions of the postillions were taken before a magistrate, and these witnesses deposed to being present at a duel on Kingsdown.\* Mr. Barnett, one of the seconds, tells that "on quitting our chaises on the top of Kingsdown, &c."† The London papers record that—"Reports are arrived from Bath that the son of a celebrated actor, who though very young had all the romance of honour in his character which is attributed to the heroes of antiquity, fell two days ago in that city defending a young lady's honour against the aspersions cast upon it by a certain military gentleman."‡ A London letter, dated from Bath 1st July, says—"On Kingsdown, about four miles from this place, &c."§ Another says the same—"On Kingsdown, &c., Mathews, not much hurt, is gone off.|| Another letter, dated from Bath, 6th July, says—"We are informed that the last affair between Mr. M—— and Mr. S—— was not in consequence of any dispute concerning a certain young lady, but was occasioned by Mr. S—— refusing to sign a paper certifying the spirit and propriety of Mr. M——'s behaviour on the former encounter. The latter gentleman then sent a challenge, which was accepted, and they went by agreement to Kingsdown in order to decide their quarrel. After a few passes they fell, &c."¶ Another account, given as an extract from a letter from Bath of 1st July, says—"Young Sheridan and Capt. Mathews of this town, who lately had an encounter in a tavern in London upon account of the Maid of Bath, have had another this morning upon Kingsdown, about four miles from this place. Sheridan is

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\* Moore, p. 80. † Moore, p. 65. ‡ *General Evening Post*.

§ *London Evening Post*. || *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*.

¶ *General Evening Post*, 9th July.



much wounded, but whether mortally is not known.”\* Yet another extract from a letter from Bath, 1st July—“Young S——n and Capt. M——s had another duel this morning upon Kingsdown, about four miles from this place. S——n much wounded. They hacked at each other rolling on the ground, the seconds standing by quiet spectators.”† This conduct of the seconds, it must be remembered, was in accordance with the previously made determined agreement already mentioned. The *Times* memoir after Sheridan’s death in 1816 and the *Gentleman’s Magazine*‡ on the same subject both record the event as having been on Kingsdown. Thus these contemporary accounts agree, and must be more reliable than the recollections or imagination of a lady fifty years after the event, who is the sole authority for the Claverton story, and whose other statements are so often untrue. Moore’s life, published in 1825, quotes the depositions of the postillions, yet he seems but carelessly to have read his own story or he could hardly have allowed Claverton Down to have remained. Probably all the ladies of or visitors to Bath know this Down, as it is always before their eyes, but how many knew, or even to-day know, of Kingsdown four miles away. The reason why Kingsdown was chosen is clear enough, as the fight being for life the London road must be available at once for escape. Sheridan in this second affair, unlike Mathews in the first, having refused his life, was considered to have done well and right, according to the views of the time; and Mathews now by his challenge and conduct and success was considered to have wiped off the stain left by his former submission, and so at once he was socially reinstated. There was thus no other feeling against him.

It happened that at the time of the duel Miss Linley was sing-

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\* Bingley’s Journal, 11th July.

† Say’s *Weekly Journal*, 11th July. ‡ Vol. 86.

ing at Oxford, but learning on her way back to Bath of the fight and the consequent trouble she surprised her companions by exclaiming—"Oh, my husband, my husband." Sheridan, too, as he lay ill trying for an interview "begged it by the tender appellation of husband." No one believed in this little piece of comedy. As previously stated the elopement gave increased opportunity for the censorious, and hence a pretended marriage story was circulated, as hoping to benefit or cover the insensate folly of the now soiled damsel. The date given for the marriage was the end of March whilst on their trip to France, but it may be noted that Sheridan writing from France, 15th April, still writes\* "Miss Linley" is fixed in a convent. Other efforts were made to the same purpose. A rather ambiguous paragraph of July, just after the duel states—it is now confidently asserted that nothing criminal passed between Mr. S. and the Maid of Bath in their late tour in France, but that Mr. S., the young gentleman said to be killed in a duel with Captain M., at every place they put up at requested the landlady's company, and took care to have Miss L. constantly provided with a bedfellow.† Whatever Sheridan's intentions by this elopement might have been and such folly led to no other thought, it may be taken for certain that—to use a newspaper phrase—he did not effect his purpose. Whether they are married or not, wrote one, their parents have been very industrious in keeping them separate,‡ and to aid this intention, Miss Linley was now sent away to some relation at Wells. The exact connection with Wells is not traced and there seems to be no record or guide at Wells. It may be suggested that the aunt Isabella, who married Philpot may have been living there, but if so she has left no mark. The young lady wrote to her lover—§ it is strongly reported that we are married,—yet she makes no further assertion or allusion in

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\* Rae, p. 170, Vol. 1. † *General Evening Post*, 4th July, 1772.

‡ *London Magazine*. § Rae, pp. 207, 208.

confirmation, but adding that her father had declared he would rather see her to her grave than see her married to him. Throughout all this trouble there came no insistence, no claim for a marriage from either of the interested couple. When sufficiently recovered, Sheridan in turn was sent away to Waltham in Essex, where he arrived on the 27th August, and so with this removal his connection with Bath ceased. From Waltham he wrote to his sister—remember me to the Lynnets—alluding to a family named Lynn—and to this he adds in brackets—how like Linnets,—alluding here to a play on the Linley name, as a musical household. Soon afterwards, in October, 1772, Mr. Sheridan and his family also quitted Bath and returned to Dublin.\* The Sheridan connection with or residence in Bath then it must be distinctly noted was only from say October, 1770, to October, 1772, just barely two years; and so far as Richard is concerned only from early in 1771 to August, 1772. The Linley family, too, the home being broken by these events, also soon moved away to London, where the young lady found professional engagements. Just as after the first duel, conflicting reports were now spread about relating to this second. Mr. Sheridan, sen., naturally took his wounded son's side, accepted his report and, with the feelings of an angry father, chose to consider Mathew's conduct "by no means fair and honourable"†; this is improved by his daughter, Mrs. Lefanu, losing no chance to drop down on Mathews, into "considered him in the light of a murderer," "a vile assassin."‡ Such words in such a case are meaningless and absurd. Both writers forgot or rather did not know that the fight was unto death, that on no account were the seconds to interfere. Had Mathews killed Sheridan on Kingsdown, it was only what Sheridan would have done to Mathews. It must also be clearly distinguished, as is not quite the case in the biographies that these fatherly and sisterly opinions refer to the effects of the duel

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\* Moore. † Moore. ‡ Rae 206.

and in no way refer to or imply any public opinion on the original social scandal which produced it. In the last biography, perhaps detecting the weakness in the great authority so often used, it is remarked that—Mrs. Lefanu “wrote in good faith and her statement of facts is at once lucid and conclusive. With regard to her opinions or conjectures her testimony cannot have any special weight with any competent critic.” Yet when the “lucid and conclusive facts” are examined they too are found to be nearly all conjecture, and some entirely untrue, only just equal in weight with her opinions. This document should never have been published or accepted as history without close examination.

Other reports got into circulation reflecting on the veracity of Sheridan, who had been found tripping on the other occasions. This he in turn did not like. As before by reason of the contradictions, an official investigation was made, an impartial relation drawn up and deposited with Mr. Wade, and submitted to Mr. Barnett and Captain Paumier, and through Mr. Brereton declared to be true and impartial, “upon the whole as accurate as could be expected.” Mathews was declared to have discovered as much genuine, cool, and intrepid resolution as man could do. Sheridan was thus again beaten with his denials, his “account did not disprove anything material.”\* When Sheridan left Bath the old position of the combatants was reversed, Mathews now retained the field. Sheridan, like Mathews before, chafed at his defeat and became irritated at the decisions against him and by reports and gossip not in his favour. Thus from Waltham he wrote asking were there any reports about after I left Bath, to which was answered 4th September, 1772, none had been heard. This did not satisfy, and he seemed determined to stir up another quarrel with somebody. “Let me entreat you to be calm and compose your mind,” wrote his.

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\* Moore p. 65—93.

friend Grenville. He wrote to Capt. Knight (Mathews' second) and gave a copy of the letter to Capt. Paumier (his own second) and he intended sending a copy to Mr. Wade, lest "they" might suppress it, and he wished this fact, with the copy, to be shown about.\* But his friend Paumier did not apparently act or see matters as he wished, so he in turn came in for insult—"I have written for the last time to Paumier in such a manner as if he has the smallest pretence to honour or feeling will punish him sufficiently for his present mean sacrifice of both"† Some one seems to have kept him supplied with unfavourable news, as under date 8th December, 1772, he wrote that he had an account of the basest, meanest, and most disgraceful piece of treachery that ever disgraced human nature, and then he charges Mathews with bullying Paumier to sign some "infamous falsehoods," which he was told were credited. I shall seek the bottom of this treachery, and if I do not revenge it may I live to deserve it. A friend wrote him again begging him not to suffer himself to be too much enraged. A little later he received letters from Bath, which although not quite so satisfactory as he might have wished, yet he learned that what he had been previously told was "misrepresentation highly exaggerated and malicious." This satisfied him somewhat, but on the 4th January, 1773, he was still "very uncertain" about this affair, and was disgusted with the "whole set of them" on "both sides," and shall grow weary of their machinations: "I never now reflect on that place but it puts me out of sorts." Yet he was the first to start the game, and would have liked it well enough had there been but one party, had his own versions been always accepted. All trouble now disappeared, Mathews and his party held the ground, his veracity had never been doubted.

Moore closed this part of the "Life" with an anecdote which

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\* Rae, p. 214.      † Rae, p. 244.

“used to be related by Woodfall.” A statement of Sheridan’s conduct in the duels having appeared in one of the Bath papers “so false and calumnious” as to require immediate answer, he asked Woodfall to insert the “false” statements in his paper, promising a denial or answer to follow. Woodfall, continues the story, “lost not a moment” in transcribing the “calumnious article into his paper,” but no answer or denial ever came. In another work this story reads,—the charges were reprinted in full in *The Public Advertiser*, but were never refuted.\* For such an absolute statement an exact reference should be given. An examination of *The Public Advertiser*—Woodfall’s paper—from September, 1772, to April, 1773, shows no such thing. The only paragraph noted is one on the 19th November, 1772,† which, under date Bath, 16th November, says—“Mr. Sheridan, jun., is entirely recovered of his wounds but has lost the use of his right arm from receiving a shot between the bones of the joint.” As pistols were not used this is one more of the curiosities of this history. It may be remembered that the story of what Woodfall “used to say” in 1772, was now being repeated or so attempted in 1825. If there were any foundation for the story, it must have materially differed in fact. Next, on the 6th April, 1773;—Mrs. Lefanu, with her usual inexactness says it was in September, 1772;—Sheridan entered as a student in the Middle Temple, and so came again very near his lady love, who was singing often at Drury Lane. An advertisement of 19th February, 1773, shows the performance at Drury Lane Theatre of Judas Maccabeus, the principle vocal parts by Miss Linley and Miss Mary Linley, with, at the end of the first act, a “concerto” on the violin by Mr. Thomas Linley. But her position was not as it was before the elopement, her name became associated with more than one, presumably towards marriage, and this caused and revived the old jealousy with Sheridan as they

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\* Wilke’s Sheridan, &c., by W. F. Rae, p. 153. † P. 4, col. 1.

could not meet, and he presumed to rebuke as before, the result, a quarrel, and now a demand from the damsel for the return of her letters. Thus again showing clearly that as between themselves there was no idea of a marriage. This last position has some local interest as in the *Bath Chronicle*, 15th April, 1773,\* is given a correspondence purporting to be between the young lady and a noble lord. His letter reads :—

“Adorable Creature,

Permit me to assure you in the most tender and affectionate manner that the united force of your charms and qualifications have made so complete a prisoner of my art (*sic*) that I despair of its being set at liberty but through your means.

Under this situation I have it ever to lament that the laws will not permit me to offer you my hand. Here I cannot assist my fate ; but what I can dispose of, my *heart* and my *fortune* are entirely at your devotion, thinking myself the happiest of mankind should either be acceptable.

Lady A—— who will deliver this and who obligingly vouchsafes to be my mediator, will, I flatter myself, urge the sincerity of my heart on this occasion so as to obtain a permission for me to throw myself at your feet to-morrow evening. In momentary expectation of which

I am your devoted admirer,

Wednesday evening, 4 o'clock.

G———R.”

The G———r here is given as Grosvenor. Miss Linley's letter replies :—

“My Lord,

Lest my silence should bear the most distant interpretation of listening to your proposals, I condescend to answer your infamous letter.

You lament the laws will not permit you to offer me your hand, I lament it too my lord, but on a different principle—to convince your dissipated heart that I have a soul capable of *refusing* a coronet when the owner is not the object of my affections—depising it when the offer of an unworthy possessor.

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\* P. 3, col. 3.



The reception your *honourable* messenger met with in the execution of her embassy saves me the trouble of replying to the other parts of your letter, and (if you have any feelings left) will explain to you the *baseness* as well as the *inefficacy* of your design.  
L——v.”

These letters are or were accompanied by the ensuing note to the editor:—“The following letters are confidently said to have passed between Lord G——r and the celebrated English syren Miss L——y. I send them to you for publication not with any view to increase the volume of literary scandal which I am sorry to say at present needs no assistance, but with the more laudable intent of setting example for our modern belles by holding out the character of a young woman who, notwithstanding the solicitations of her profession and the flattering example of higher ranks has added *incorruptible virtue* to a number of the most elegant qualifications.

Grosvenor Square.

HORATIO.

These letters were also printed in *The Macaroni*. But, notwithstanding the desire of the sender, they do not read and can hardly be accepted as genuine, yet, here re-produced for the first time the tone just helps towards realising the unpleasant position and the surrounding “literary scandal.”

Thomas Grenville wrote—“Why was her fate so cruel, so early to bring upon her the imputation and censure of the world.”\*

Under the above circumstances and the persistence of the young people, Mr. Linley at last consented to a union which he saw he could hardly prevent. Mr. Sheridan, however, still persisted in his objection to his son's choice of a lady “whose name had been so much the subject of public discussion.” She sang in the Messiah on the 2nd April; and she sang also the Messiah with her sister, on the 6th April in the chapel of the hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and

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\* Rae, p. 223.



deserted young children in Lamb's Conduit Fields. The charge for admission was 10s. 6d., and gentlemen were desired to come without swords and the ladies without hoops.\* Her last appearance was at a grand concert of vocal and instrumental music for the benefit of her brother Thomas at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket, on the 12th April; the eve of her marriage. Curiously enough, the contributor evidently not knowing what was about to happen, the same Bath paper in which the above letters appeared announced,† taking care to be emphatic—"We have the best authority to assure the public that Mr. Richard Sheridan, now a student in the Middle Temple, was yesterday married in London to the justly celebrated and admired Miss Linley." In this paragraph, as with others already noticed, the yesterday was the day before it was written, not the day before the *Chronicle* was published. Considering the doubtful and wild antecedents an absolute confirmation of their marriage has always been wanted. The *Gentleman's Magazine*,‡ under marriages, 13th April, gives—"Mr. Sheridan, of the Temple, to the celebrated Miss Linley, of Bath." He had been in the Temple just a week. Another announcement,§ putting it under date 14th April, says—"The celebrated Miss Linley, so well known in the musical world, to Mr. Sheridan, son of Mr. Sheridan, the actor." The error in date here seems to arise from the printer omitting the figures 13th altogether. As no place for the ceremony has as yet been given complete proof of the event is still wanting. Long afterwards, in 1792, one writer and the only one who ever ventured alluding to Sheridan's life at Bath tells that "there he married the celebrated Miss Linley."|| With such a lead necessarily a search had to be made at Bath, a troublesome labour lost, as this was found to be

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\* *Public Advertiser*, 5 April, 1773, p. 3, col. 2. † *Chronicle*, p. 3, col. 4.

‡ Vol. 43, p. 202. § *London Magazine*, Vol. 42, p. 205.

|| *New Lady's Magazine*, Vol. 7.

another piece of imagination, "our own make." At last, after continued search, the one little word came up and curiously twice in the same day, when the marriage is given under date 13th April, 1773—"Mr. Sheridan to the celebrated Miss Linley at Marybone church"\* The register of Marylebone church accordingly records the marriage now for the first time published.—"13th April, 1773, between Richard Brinsley Sheridan, esq., of the parish of St. Paul, Covent Garden, in the county of Middlesex, a bachelor, and Elizabeth Ann Linley, of this parish, spinster, a minor, by license, with the consent of the father of the said minor." One of the witnesses was Thomas Linley. The writing of the two signatures of the contracting parties is so strangely alike both might have been done by one hand.

What should we think of the "syren," the "angel" to-day. There is an engraved portrait of her when young published in September, 1772,† just after the duel, until now unknown but approved and considered "elegant" at the time. The portrait in the Dulwich Gallery taken later in life after marriage has the advantage of being in oils and by an artist alive to his duties and well skilled in the picturesque. But does either impress with a vision of rapturous beauty. May not the notoriety of public life, public advertisement, or public praise, have helped the impression as with many it so often does. Every notice of a woman seems to be in praise of something, even of her "frock," as to publish the contrary may be very wrong.

At first the young couple went to a cottage in the country and then moved to a house, furnished by Mr. Linley, in Orchard Street, Oxford Road‡ better known now as Oxford Street, as Orchard Street is also better known as near Portman Square.

\* *Town and Country Magazine*, p. 223.

\* *The Lady's Magazine*, Vol. 4, p. 223.

† *London Magazine*, Vol. 41, p. 406.

‡ "Historical and Biographical Magazine."



MISS LINLEY.



Next came the settlement over the £3,000 compensation money. Here, considering that the lady was only nineteen, and so had two years' loss to account for, and remembering the loss during the first engagement, Mr. Linley took £1,500 and the other moiety £1,500, was handed over to the new housekeepers. This was the first considerable sum Sheridan had ever possessed, and he at once "acted as if the mines of Peru and Potosi had been at his command,"\* and proceeded to live gaily until it was gone. Presently necessity compelled some sort of exertion. Sheridan has received lavish praise because his wife did not again appear in public, the credit being placed to his resolution, but it is clear through her life that this was the hated work she wished to escape. She once told her father that if she married she would do so to be free, and her marriage certainly removed her from the parental exactions. It must have been as much her will as his that she thus retired. After her marriage she improved in appearance, the peaceful rest must have been most acceptable. Yet Sheridan found himself in a difficulty as usual never anticipated, as besides that he had notions that it did not become a "gintilmin" to work for money, he considered a public appearance before an audience a degradation, a sentiment in which his wife would be entirely in accord. He was often stung when twitted on being the son of a player, and once when boasting of a kingly descent another present remarked aside, "He tells the truth for once, the last time I saw his father he was King of Denmark." Yet stories were started that they so far altered their resolution that Mrs. Sheridan gave certain concerts both at her own house and at Bath.† Another account said these were private subscription concerts "by which perhaps more was obtained than could have been the case in places of general admission.‡

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\* "Annual Biography, &c.," Vol. 1, p. 146.

† "Lady's Monthly Museum," Vol. 23. ‡ A. Lefanu, pp. 402, 403.

This was contradicted with the assertion that no money was taken or received, and that the entertainment was simply an ordinary and private return for other social favours received. At one of these concerts given in Orchard Street at which were assembled "A host of nobility and gentry" Mrs. Sheridan sang *Ellen Aroon*, the same she sang at the first Sheridan entertainment at Bath.\* No such concerts were given at Bath.

After what must have been but a poor life, Mrs. Sheridan died at Bristol Hot Wells, 28th June, 1792, at the early age of 38, and was buried with her sister, with "decent funeral pomp" and with a large and polite attendance, in what became the Linley vault in Wells Cathedral.

Sheridan under the pressure of necessity at first tried theatrical literature, and afterwards using his opportunities was introduced to the "phrenzy" of politics, and was for a time member for Ilchester. As the boy so was the man, and after ruining "the fairest promise that ever blossomed" by his innate profligacy, neglecting every virtue, he only just escaped death in a debtor's gaol. His political life has now no interest especially here, but of his not large contributions to literature, two of his pieces—"The Rivals," and "The School for Scandal"—must live for all time. It happened that on the morning of the day "The School for Scandal" was produced, Mrs. Sheridan gave birth to a son. The next day a notice of the play, says:—"Yesterday morning Mrs. Sheridan was delivered of a son. The mother and child are likely to do well. In the evening of the same day Mr. Sheridan's muse was delivered of a bantling which is likely to live for ever"† These two pieces being especially based on local scenes and manners, the result of his own knowledge and experiences, will always still further inseparably connect his name with the city of Bath.

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\* Parke W. T., Vol. 2, p. 136.

† Parke W. T., Musical Memoirs, Vol. 1, p. 9.





(CAPT.) THOMAS MATHEWS,  
of Bath.



## THOMAS MATHEWS : AND HIS CONNECTION WITH BATH.

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Whilst the two other names already noticed have received biographical attention, of Thomas Mathews no biography has yet been written, for the reason that next to nothing is known about him and new matter not easily found. Considering how prominent he was in his day and as being a man of known family and property this is somewhat strange. The passing references to him hitherto have been found almost entirely in the biographies of the Sheridans. It has thus been gathered that he was connected with Llandaff and that he had an interest in property in Glamorgan but whereabouts or to what extent has not been known. Having this Welsh tradition in mind, when making a start with these notes, there came up a curious and rather startling incident, as in the registers of Bath abbey church under date 25 Sept 1735 Benjamin Mathews of Llandaff married Rachel Densham of Bath ; and in 1744 about the date that our Thomas under notice should have been born, there appears as baptized in the same church, 23 June, Thomas son of Benjamin and Rachel Mathews. He must be passed however as being another baby.

Following up the lead to Llandaff and the history of Glamorgan, the Welsh pedigrees are soon found faulty. There were two Mathews families at Llandaff, one at the Court within the town and another at Radyr a few miles out, so the local accounts get mixed. The Radyr branch was more connected with Ireland, having property at Thurles.

Thomas Mathews of Llandaff Court, who was born in 1676, was M.P. 1744, commander of the fleet in the Mediterranean, elected elder brother of the Trinity House 1745 and was

made admiral of the white the same year.\* He married twice, his second wife Millicent Fuller survived him. He died 2 Oct 1751 in Bloomsbury Square, leaving a son Thomas born 1711, who became a major in the army. The major married Ann daughter of Robert Knight of Congresbury, whose brother would be the uncle Knight and Captain Knight often previously noticed in the Sheridan story. Returning somewhat, the admiral by his will, proved 28th Oct 1751,† a long and verbose document, evidently showed want of confidence in his son the major and foresaw coming events. From the estate which was put under trust, one of the trustees being John Baynard of the Navy Office, the major was to have £700 a year for life ; the admiral's widow an annuity of £300 ; and the grandson, our Thomas, the son of the major, had £120 a year until he was sixteen and after that £400 a year until he was twenty one, and besides, after the death of his grandmother her annuity of £300 was to be continued to him in like manner for his life : and in 1793 all the trustees being dead administration was granted to him as "residuary legatee for life." The major died 25 June 1768 in Dean Street,‡ and in July administration was granted of the goods and chattels and credits of Thomas Mathews esq., of St. George's, Hanover square, widower, to Thomas Mathews esq., the son of the deceased. With the major's death his annuity ceased and so there was nothing to will. The major who while in the service may have often changed his station resigned the army in 1744. He must have been very little at Llandaff and a slight lead prompts the thought that he must have been in Ireland at the time of his resignation and this happens to be also the time when our Thomas was born. In a little book or skit by Peter Paul Pallet (*i.e.* rev. Richard Warner)

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\* *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 21, p. 477, col. 1.

† Busby, 288.

‡ *Gentleman's Magazine*, Vol. 38, p. 349 and p. 303.

entitled—Bath characters or sketches from life—published in 1807, Tom Rattle is Thomas Mathews. Some one approaches singing, when says—

Ramrod. Do my ears deceive me or is it my old friend Tom Rattle.

Rattle. The same in sober truth my dear Ramrod.

Ramrod. I protest the sight of your phizz is quite a cordial to me, a very opthalmic, a cure for a distempered vision. But prythee Tom, where hast thou concealed that comical face of thine these last three years past. From what region dost thou now come.

Rattle. Surfeited with fiddling and casino, family dinners, monday's lies and every day scandal, with political preachers and preaching politicians, I turned my horses heads one morning towards the mountains of Wales,—then—crossing St. George's channel I landed safely in my own dear country which I had not visited for almost half a century.

First here he speaks of Ireland as his own country which it could only have been by the chance of birth. Then it was "almost" half a century since he had seen it. If we could take this to mean say forty eight years from the date of this skit, the difference takes us back to 1759 when he would be sixteen, entitled to the larger income and his working life about to begin. He was not baptized at Llandaff.

Next on the 29th May 1762 Thomas Mathews was commissioned as ensign in the 86th regiment of foot. In 1765, 19 April, he exchanged to the 54th regiment\* to rank with the date of his first commission. He left this regiment, 26th July 1766, as ensign Mathews and is not in the army list for 1767. Next he appears married, but where or exactly when this event happened, as almost always usual, it is hard to

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\* Army List.

discover. He married Diana daughter of Robert Jones, of Fonmon Castle\* in the parish of Penmark in Glamorgan, but he was not married at Penmark. With this marriage he had a further jointure income, thus in the little sketch already noticed by P. P. Pallet—he is made to say he started first towards Wales to court the charms of unsophisticated nature “upon his jointure farms” in Glamorgan.

In order of time, the *Bath Chronicle* of thursday the 4th October 1770, tells us that the season was begun, and that on saturday the 6th, the theatre would be opened, on monday the music would begin at the Pump Room, and on tuesday would be the first ball. Following this the arrival list soon swells and amongst these arrivals during the week, as announced in the *Chronicle* issue for 11th October 1770† are Mr. and Mrs. Mathews. There is so far nothing to connect these with the subject here but presently it will be found with fair probability that it was so.

Mathews from his general qualifications was soon in the vortex of Bath life, and a well known man. Thus he was early acquainted with the Linley family and would be so in time with the Sheridans who it may be noted must have arrived in Bath about the same date. Then came his association with young Sheridan through 1771, and presently the quarrels of 1772, these being necessarily already told in connection with, as inseparable from, the Sheridan story.

Examining now the records, the contemporary idea of the trouble, was not that which has been later published. The *General Evening Post* of 4 July 1772, only three days after the second duel, says that Sheridan fell defending a young lady's honour against the aspersions cast upon it by a certain military gentleman.

A later notice in January 1792, twenty years only after the event,‡ says,— Among the admirers of Miss Linley was a Mr.

\* Clark G. T., Limbus, &c., p. 216. † P. 3, col. 3.

‡ *Historical and Biographical Magazine*, p. 11.

Mathews a gentleman well known in the fashionable circles at Bath. A paragraph inserted in a newspaper was construed to imply a reflection on the intimacy between Mr. Sheridan and Miss Linley and traced through the printer to Mr. Mathews. Mr. Mathews having set out for London was followed by Mr. Sheridan. They met,—they fought a duel with swords in a tavern &c. Mathews gave an apology and with this—Sheridan hastened to Bath to make the apology as public as the insult.

Another account of 1808 shows the same intention, this says—Mr. Mathews one of the distinguished votaries of fashion at Bath had the audacity to insert in a public paper a paragraph reflecting on Miss Linley's character. Sheridan followed him to London and "found Mathews at a tavern in the neighbourhood of Covent Garden and a duel on the spot was the consequence." This was still the prevailing idea and opinion and was repeated when Sheridan died in 1816, the only blame on Mathews was that he had "aspersed the character and libelled" the young lady in a provincial paper. Dr. Watkins in 1817 puts the matter a little clearer when he says—after the elopement—"some animadversions upon the fugitives in a local paper excited much attention as evidently coming from the pen of one who must have been well acquainted with their affairs and former history." All these allusions, not exactly recording fact, show the effect of or allude to the advertisement which neither writer troubled to hunt up, but so far it is clear there was no idea or charge that Mathews had behaved offensively in any other way. When the elopement was known—"it was buzzed about in Bath" that Mathews had been privy to it,\* but this he promptly denied. Yet this helps to show how little suspicion or thought of injury there could have been against him at the time. It was only after the elopement when Sheridan's charge purposely left behind him got into circulation that such a thought originated.

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\* "The Craftsman," 10 Oct., 1772.

The future author of the *School for Scandal* knew well his work and that in a few days his story would be all over the town. Then came the irritation following the refusal of Mr. Linley to see him after these reports to his prejudice had reached him, which prompted the idea of the advertisement as the only ready means of a public denial of the slander and with a public accusation of the slanderer. As the thing stands to-day no expressions of denial could be more forcible, nor could there be a shorter or more public way of proclaiming it. Naturally the Sheridans did not like it and protested. Although for a time the story had some effect in the local coterie it took no lasting hold ; as the affair became better known and understood the slander died away, and was soon forgotten. The next event is the duel which followed. A charge or insinuation when once started loses nothing by repetition ; and if any man commit a wrong action especially if against the code of honour he will be condemned with but little hesitation. The feeling against Mathews after the first duel ran high, his defeat and having begged his life and given an apology was considered unpardonable. Some thought this censure in some decree unmerited, but he was consequently obliged to leave Bath and so retired into Wales to be "among strangers"\* hoping for forgetfulness ; but in vain the story followed him.

Again later, after the second duel, Mr. Sheridan vexed and angry at his son being wounded wrote of Mathews, who had gone to France,—if he show his head at Bath again he will be shunned as one infected with the plague.† These remarks as met with in the biographies read, or are made to read, as if they referred to the Linley social trouble. This was not the case ; that charge was never to the fore ; the allusions refer entirely to the duels. Mathews left Bath after the first duel because of his "ungentlemanlike" defeat ; and the above allusions of Mr.

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\* "Craftsman," 10 Oct.      † Rae, 204.

Sheridan after the second duel are entirely his own expressions ; his wish was father to the thought, as from the unusual character of the fight he considered his son almost murdered. But Mathews on his return had no such experiences, he held his own ; and more, his conduct was approved.

Mrs. Lefanu's narrative, written after Mathews' death puts Mathews always in the worst light. The charge that he had "persecuted Miss Linley with unlawful addresses," or as the latest improvement elaborates it,—he tormented and terrified the gentle Miss Linley with obnoxious and ungentlemanly addresses—has been accepted, and notwithstanding the—"it is said"—treated as fact and copied and reprinted, without thought or investigation ; without attempted verification. Whilst accepting and using the Lefanu narrative freely and willingly, the latest biographer seems to have had some misgivings as already noticed. The same writer too says of Moore, he was always ready to glean but not particular about the source or authority of his information. Why then use him ? Why should these statements continue to be echoed ? Such testimony is worse than useless, serving only to propagate untruth. Sir said Dr. Johnson, many things that are false are transmitted from book to book and gain credit in the world.

There appeared later another letter or narrative purporting to be from or by Elizabeth Sheridan (Mrs. H. Lefanu) but which on examination has been declared a forgery. It is an elaboration of Lefanu's published account but stronger in expression as seems to be the general drift of additional work on this subject. Yet this too has been used\* as the basis of the story against Mathews. The "Dictionary of National Biography," under Sheridan, Elizabeth, mentions this letter as appearing in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Oct. 1815, and then as noticed as a forgery in the *Athenæum*

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\* Octogenarian.



20 Jan'y 1895. First it is not in the *Gentleman's Magazine* as noted and then there is no *Athenæum* for the 20 Jan'y 1895. In the latest Sheridan biography too the date of this letter in one place is given as 2 May 1771 and in another as 1770. The thing appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for Oct 1825, was reviewed in the *Quarterly* in March 1826, condemned as a "foolish forgery" in *Macmillan's Magazine* for January 1861, and further noticed in the *Athenæum* of 26th January 1895. It is not noticed by Moore because it was fabricated after his work was published.

Besides other untruths Mrs. Lefanu's narrative has another fallacy when Mathews for the first and only time is dubbed a major. This helps again to confusion, for this utterly false statement has been copied into the "Dict. Nat. Biog." and incorporated in prominent letters in the head lines of the new biography. A new learner now will be puzzled to know and will have to find out whether he is reading of the father, who was a major, and who the other major was, and then to find the captain. After the duels, hunting for some notice of Mathews and his antecedents the only note met with tells that—Captain Mathews son of the late Major Mathews has made his escape to France.\* Small as this is it helps to show that he was the son of the major and that he was sometimes called Captain. He has become major solely by effluxion of time, another recollection of Mrs. Lefanu, fifty five years after the events.

Moore having the Lefanu story before him, and writing generally not without some bias, in conclusion is obliged to record of Mathews and the young lady,—“all that could be said was that he presumed in public too much on the intimacy and innocent familiarity which her youth and his status permitted.” Just so. The latest biography after using at every chance the most opprobrious words and names against Mathews, is obliged

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\* *General Evening Post*, 4 July, 1772.



also to close the attempted condemnation with—"apparently however nothing worse was thought of Mathews by most of his contemporaries than that he had acted somewhat rashly and in very bad taste."\* Just so again; and it is the contemporary opinion which should be sought and which must be taken. With the above conclusions of the two biographers and the contemporary opinions herein brought together for the first time, this accusation, the imagination of an interested, scheming and jealous youth endeavouring to cover his own foolish act, must in all fairness be newly weighed. Three times the charges made by this youth against Mathews, after official enquiry, were found to be untrue. It may well be then that this other was equally so. Besides that Mathews' veracity was never doubted, after the official enquiry which followed the second duel he was declared to have "discovered as much genuine, cool, and intrepid resolution as man could do,"† was forgiven his defeat, and was at once reinstated in society and remained a valued and prominent social leader in Bath for nearly fifty years. Young Sheridan's attempt to revive the quarrel with somebody or anybody, although ineffectual kept the subject privately somewhat alive until the end of 1772 and the beginning of 1773. The "Mathews party" however was too strong for him, opinion was against him, and so he came to hate the place.

There is one other insinuation repeated in the latest, which reads,—“Mathews is said to have been rich and married,” and—“lived in Bath as a bachelor.” First note the—is said—this being the sole authority for the statement,—and then, as a bachelor, he must have been without his wife. He clearly did no such thing. There is no warrant but this lowest form of gossip for such scandal.

It is difficult now to follow the remaining social side of the

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\* Rae, 174.      † Moore, 67.

Bath life, but a few lucky notes will fairly help. John Wilkes being at Bath notes in his diary

2 Jan'y 1773. Dined and supped at Captain Mathews, with Captain and Mrs Mathews, Miss Wilkes, Mr and Mrs Brown, Colonel, Mrs and Miss Gould, Captains Rice and Nugent.

11 Jan'y 1773. Dined at the mess of Captain Rice in Orange Court with Captains Rice, Mathews, , Oliver, Fonnereau, and Day.

13 Jan'y 1773. Dined at Dr Delacour's in Prince's Buildings with Mr and Mrs Delacour, Captains Howard and Mathews.

14 Jan'y 1773. Dined and supped at Captain Mathews with Mr and Mrs Mathews, Miss Wilkes, Mr Day, Captains Rice and Howard.

Passing over some years Wilkes was again at Bath for a short visit when he records—

1 May 1778. Dined with Colonel Whitmore, at Miss Temples in Galloway Buildings, Captain Mathews and Edward Morgan, esq.

The allusion above to a dinner at Dr. Delacour's is of some further interest for it forms part of an often repeated joke or pleasantry which was even considered worthy of being included in an edition of "Joe Miller." It is headed

No Variety.

When Sam Foote was once at Bath he was asked what fare he usually had at Mr. Delacour's table. Sir he replied—we have always a piece of beef, a saddle of mutton, a couple of chicken, and—Captain Mathews.\* Foote was fond of good living. An epigram criticising this habit tells that he kept

A table so spread, and a cellar so stored,  
With a service of plate too—Foote lives like a lord.

\* "Joe Miller" (Ward, Lock & Co.), Joke 657, p. 145.

\* "Wit and Wisdom or the World's Jest Book," Jest No. 848.

\* "Excerpta of Wit or Railway Companion," p. 252.

From these chance allusions it can be seen that Mathews' presence anywhere was always welcome, was a very "ophthalmic cure for distempered vision."

Besides his social qualifications he has left a much wider repute, more valued and remembered perhaps than all other adventures or duelling squabbles. Bath during this time was the centre or head quarters for the game of whist and in this game Mathews became the leading spirit and authority, being always referred to for many years in all the first circles at Bath on disputed points in the game.\* His name is well recalled by all players to-day from his having published a little book entitled—Advice to the young whist player. The first issue in 1804 was in part anonymous by An Amateur, now rarely met with. There were twenty numbered editions of this work besides others unnumbered and others printed in Paris.† In time after Mathews' death it was issued first only with another name as "editor," and then presently as with other works was absorbed and the original name lost, but the rules and maxims continued much the same. At the Club established in York Buildings in 1790, and in other card rooms it was always placed ready for reference.

So then time passed on until presently a short obituary notice tells us that in 1820 on April 25‡ died at his house in Portland Place in this city at the advanced age of 77 Thomas Mathews esq., a gentleman of a very ancient and respectable family in the county of Glamorgan and nearly half a century an inhabitant of Bath where he was well known and esteemed by an extensive circle of friends, associating with the prevailing wits and celebrated characters who during that long period visited this fashionable city. The expression "nearly half a century" must

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\* Courtney W. P., "Whist, &c."

† Green E., "Bibliotheca Somersetensis."

‡ *Bath Journal*, monday, 1 May 1820, p. 3, col. 5.

be noted as had he lived to Oct it would have been just half a century since the arrival list announced the coming of Mr. and Mrs. Mathews. The *Chronicle* of thursday, 4th May,\* says—Sunday died at his house in Portland Place, &c. The *Chronicle* by naming the day as sunday makes the death on the 30th April, not the 25th as in the *Journal*. Another curious discrepancy on what would seem so simple and certain. The will of Thomas Mathews of Bath esqre. dated 13 Dec 1818, proved December 1820,† being short as his estate interest ceased with his life, is here given nearly in full :—

I give and bequeath every thing of every kind without the exception of the most trifling article to my wife Diana and appoint her whole and sole executrix, to do therewith as she may please.

One witness was Charlotte Jones of Fonmon Castle.

Next, the *Chronicle* of 4 April 1822,‡ records the death on “thursday,” (*i.e.* 28 March) at her house in Portland Place in her 83rd year of Diana relict of Thomas Mathews esq. Through the long life of this much esteemed lady she evinced her charitable disposition in continual acts of kindness to the poor and distressed by whom as well as by her immediate connections her death will be sincerely regretted.

By her will proved 26 Nov 1822,§ she bequeathed legacies, valuable pictures and jewels ; and besides an interest in the house, a thousand pounds to her niece Charlotte ; and whereas I am entitled to considerable arrears of annuity from my late brother Robert in Glamorgan now the possession of my nephew Robert, from this I give to be paid any monies due as advanced to my husband or myself.

An oval tablet in the Abbey church now inside the west

\* P. 3, col. 3.    † Kent, 685.    ‡ P. 3, col. 2.

§ Herschell, 605.



MRS. (CAPT.) MATHEWS,  
of Bath.



front in the recess between the large west doors and the small south west door, rather high,—bears for inscription—

Sacred to the memory of Miss Harriett Mathews who died June 1768.

Also of Thomas Mathews esqre grandson of the late Admiral Mathews who died April 23rd 1820 aged 77.

Also of Diana relict of the above Thomas Mathews and daughter of Robert Jones of Fonmon Castle in the county of Glamorgan esqre who died 28th March 1822 aged 82.

Also of Charlotte Jones, 3rd daughter of Robert Jones of Fonmon Castle, Glamorganshire esqre and niece of the above Diana Mathews, who died 29 Dec 1839 aged 62.

This tablet requires some special remarks. Who Miss Harriett may have been does not appear but her presence shows an earlier connection with Bath. As to Thomas it must be observed that here as well as elsewhere he is esquire, not even captain. He accepted presumably the courtesy rank but personally never used it. The tablet differs again with the death date of the 23rd April instead of the 25th of the *Journal* or the 30th of the *Chronicle*. The fact would seem that both journals got behind with their news. The *Chronicle* means sunday week which would be the 23rd and the *Journal* has adopted a useful misprint. Then the tablet tells that Diana was a daughter of Robert Jones and that Charlotte was also a daughter of Robert Jones and niece of Diana but how she became niece to Diana is left as a puzzle. By her will proved 27th January 1840\* Charlotte calls herself third sister of Robert Jones, late of Fonmon, and 19 Portland Place, now of 9 Edgar buildings.

There were then three Roberts. Robert i had Robert ii and Diana. Robert ii in turn had Robert iii and daughters, Charlotte being his third daughter and so niece of Diana, and equally third sister to Robert iii.

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\* Arden 35.

The family grave or rather from its size it must be a vault, is in the nave of the Abbey church on the north side, just about two feet, the width of one grave in fact, straight south of the centre of the first or western column. A stone slab now hidden tells that—underneath repose the remains of Miss Harriett Mathews who died June 1768; also of Thomas &c., and so repeating the tablet.

On the occasion of the late visit of the late, the first, marquess of Dufferin this Mathews story was looked up and information asked for. In connection with this was announced the discovery in “a castle” in Wales of a portrait which was declared to be that of Captain Mathews.\* Another account a week or so later tells that the picture was found in “Llandaff palace” where Mathews great great grandson resides. Llandaff palace is the residence of the bishop and further as Mathews was childless a sight of his great great grandson would be a great novelty. The pictures were found in Fonmon Castle still the seat of the Jones family. It has always been known that many Mathews family relics were there, but as pictures and especially portraits rarely bear a name, as they all ought to do, very little usually can be known about them. A visit by chance when reparations and redecorations of some sort were in progress, when the pictures were down, enabled a closer examination which revealed the information written on the back of two that they were the counterfeit presentments of—Captain and Mrs. Mathews of Llandaff and Bath. Then it was desired to know where Mathews lived at Bath and the *Chronicle* in time announced that success had attended the tracing this actual residence and that an article would shortly appear which will contain new facts &c. The article appeared and the new fact was that Mathews lived at 19 Portland Place,† but as the “proofs are withheld” said the *Herald* very properly, “those interested in such matters

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\* *Bath Chronicle* 1 Sept 1898.    † *Bladud* 7 Sept 1898,



can "form no opinion of the discovery."\* The point is a very small one, hardly of interest, but why should there be any mystery, why should information asked for, if known, be withheld. The address can be easily found in the Bath Directory of the time and is now confirmed by the wills quoted.

After being entertained to luncheon Lord Dufferin was driven round the city, duly visited Portland Place, and then passed on to Claverton Down to see the site of the duel. Here a spot "supposed" to be that where was fought the Du Barry duel was selected and with some little ceremony shown as "probably"—the "probably" being kept in the back ground—the place for the Mathews-Sheridan one. Yet the duel did not take place there. As all this however was done in good faith the actors therein should they now feel a little sore or vexed have only to thank Mrs. H. Lefanu for one of her "lucid and conclusive" facts.

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\* *Bath Herald* 9 Sept 1898.

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